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VINDICATION
OF THE *1016. f 8*
Gospel of St. *3* Matthew:

In Answer to the
SECOND DEFENCE
OF THE
DISSERTATION or INQUIRY
Concerning
St. Matthew's GOSPEL.

In which is shewn,
That instead of being, what the *Title-Page* calls it,
(**A FULL ANSWER** to ALL that has been offered in
THREE Tracts, in *Vindication of the said Gospel*,)
It contains not a single Argument upon what is offered in
One of those Tracts, and often passes over what is most
material in the other Two;
That the Author neither justifies nor retracts the numerous Falshoods
charged on his **DISSERTATION** and **FIRST DEFENCE**: and *Lastly*,
That what he has advanced on the Subject, more than before, is either
false or impertinent.

BY
LEONARD TWELLS, M. A.
Vicar of St. Mary's in Marlborough.

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St. Matthews Gospel.



A SECOND
VINDICATION

Of the GOSPEL of

St. *MATTHEW.*



EAR two Years had passed, since the *Vindicator* of the Gospel of St. *Matthew*, against the Dissertation or Inquiry concerning that Gospel, published a Reply to the Defence of the said Dissertation, when the Author of the Dissertation came out with a *second* Defence. Why he defer'd doing Justice to himself and his Cause, till both were almost forgotten, he hath not
B thought

thought fit to tell us. However, if it shall appear, that the *second* Defence is written with more Temper, Candor and Judgment than the *first*, the World will not only excuse, but thank him for taking Time to cool and be more exact than formerly, on a serious and important Subject. But his very Introduction convinces us, that this extraordinary Delay has not produced any such Effects. For it is full of Rancour against the whole Body of Christians, both Clergy and Laity. The former he speaks of as *Men agitated by the Fury of a vindictive Spirit, and whose Hands are with Difficulty restrain'd from Blood*: The latter as *Bigots, Enthusiasts and Beasts of the People*. And yet the Good Man complains at the same Time, of being *branded with opprobrious and uncharitable Terms*.

Our Author *1st Def.* p. 7. said, it was very well known under whose Instruction the *Vindicator* wrote, and accordingly he oft upbraided him with his *Assistants, Adjutants and Friends*. The *Vindicator*, on the other hand, denies all Instructions and special Directions, and affirms, he had no help in drawing up the *Vindication*, and at the same Time calls upon the Defender to explain upon that Subject. The World had the more Reason to believe the *Vindicator's* Professions; because they concerned a Point, wherein he could not falsify, without bringing on himself the Scorn and Resentments of those, whose Assistance, by so doing, he must unjustly and ungratefully have disclaim'd. And yet, p. 6th of 2^d Defence, the Story is told over again, " That the *Vindication* " and *Supplement* came out indeed under the
" Name

“ Name of Mr. *Twells*: but as the Author of
 “ the *Dissertation* was credibly inform’d, under
 “ the Instruction of the *Bishop* of *London*, a cer-
 “ tain learned Layman, &c.” Upon this name-
 less Authority and against the *Vindicator*’s positive
 Denial, the Thing is still taken for granted, and
 Reflections on this Score abound throughout the
Defender’s last Book, but more particularly *Pages*
 13, 14; in which there is a Run of such disin-
 genuous and stupid Raillery, as every Man of
 Sense and good Nature must have read with *In-*
dignation. My Adversary’s Perseverance in a Mi-
 stake of so little Consequence to the World or the
 Matter in Debate, will probably induce many to
 suspect, that the whole was an Invention of his
 own, a low Artifice to raise the Credit of the *Dis-*
sertation. The Man had the Vanity to expect,
 that a great and learned Prelate would meet him
 in the Field of Controversy; and was loth the
 World should believe, that he found there only a
Vicar, * a Species of Men, of whom he expresses
 the utmost Contempt; nay, a † *Country Vicar*, and
 what is still more mortifying, a *Country Vicar* up-
 on a ‡ *little Vicarage*: To make therefore the Op-
 position more considerable, he has contrived an
 Alliance against himself in this Paper-War, con-
 sisting of the Bishop, a *certain* learned Layman
 and others, concerning whom he leaves us un-
 der the utmost *Uncertainty*. But I ask my Rea-

* See First Defence, p. 3.

† See First Defence, p. 5.

‡ See Second Defence, p. 13.

der's Pardon for troubling him about so trifling a Question, as whether the *Vindicator* wrote with or without Assistance. It may however lessen his Wonder at the Perverseness of the *Defender's* Conduct in some Parts of the present Dispute. For who can be surprized at his standing out against all *proper* Evidence from *dead* and *ancient* Writers, who sees how, to serve a Turn, he perseveres in a Falshood against a *living* Testimony, which carries its own *Verification* along with it.

Among other Things, the *Vindicator* is complained of, 2^d *Defence* p. 10, for spinning out his Argument into three long Tracts, which, the *Defender* thinks, might have been comprized in as few Words, as the *Dissertation* and its *Defence*. As if the *longest* Reply, which contains only fair and pertinent Allegations, was ever too long: Or the *shortest* Defence, otherwise managed, was ever *short enough*. Besides, our Author, by boasting of the Shortness of his *Defence*, has unluckily revived our Remembrance, that this Circumstance was owing in a good Measure to his having dropped Ten out of the Twenty-six Objections brought against St. *Matthew's* Gospel, and which he had undertaken to make good, besides Fifteen false Facts and Misrepresentations. And sure *Conciseness*, through such Management, was an Advantage not worth the Mention. On this same Account it had been better, if the 2^d *Defence* also had been longer than it is. For whereas the Title promises a *full Answer* to the Three Tracts, it is sadly defective with regard to the *Vindication* and *Reply*, and spends but Nine Lines upon the

the *Supplement*, (2^d Def. p. 13.) and those are taken up, not with *refuting*, but *abusing* an Argument therein advanced.

P. 15, the *Defender* thinks it Time to consider “ what the *Vindicator* has offered for the Genuine-ness and Divine Authority of our First Gospel, and that briefly and abstractedly from the many trivial Incidents he amuses his Reader with, and those mean Pedantick Reflections upon Grammatical Faults and Errors of the Press and Inaccuracy of Expression with which he busies himself maliciously and impertinently,” &c. What he means by *trivial Incidents*, he does not explain. But, as no *Incidents* are taken into the Dispute, save what the *Dissertation* and *Defence* led us into; If They be *trivial*, the Reader knows where the Blame is due. True it is, that the *Dissertator* committed several grievous Mistakes and made many Objections so weak, that he was ashamed of them himself; and therefore in his *First Defence*, to borrow his own Expression, he wrote *abstractedly* from these Things, or passed them over in utter Silence. At the same time he was guilty of many new Frauds and Falshoods, which the *Vindicator* in the *Reply*, *maliciously and impertinently busied himself about*; and I fear we shall find that the *trivial Incidents* of this Kind are generally passed over without Notice in the *Second Defence*. As for *Grammatical Faults* and *Inaccurate Expressions*, they occurred too oft for any other than *cursorry* Observation. Though I see no Hurt if such Things had been insisted on more fully and frequently than they are. For when a Man, who
cannot

cannot write *good English*, shall meddle in learned Controversies, I do not think an Adversary is bound to keep the Secret of his *Impertinence* and *Inability*.

And now we are come to the Objections themselves: The First of which in the *Dissertation*, p. 28, 29, stood thus, " The Title of the Gospel according to St. *Matthew*, does by no means imply, that *Matthew* himself was the Writer, but rather according to his teaching or preaching. The Titles were not affixed to the Gospels, by the Writers themselves, but by others long after, who might set the Titles on purpose to deceive, as many did in the early Days of Christianity." The *Vindicator*, p. 29 answered to this Effect, " That indeed the precise Date of those Titles could not be fixed, tho' probably they were as ancient as the Collection of those Gospels, and most certainly as old as *Irenæus* and *Clemens Alexandrinus*: The former of which gives them their present Titles *Anno* 176, the latter *Anno* 190; that those Fathers understood those Titles to imply, that they were penn'd by the *Apostles* and *Evangelists* respectively named therein; that the Construction ordinarily put upon those Titles and objected to by the *Dissertator*, were justifiable from Authorities Ecclesiastical and profane; Lastly, That the great Antiquity of those Titles strongly proved their Genuineness." The *First Defence* drops the principal Part of this Objection, viz. *That the present Title of Matthew's Gospel does by no Construction imply it to have been written by that Apostle*. He only denies what

what is not contended for, that the Fathers above mentioned knew the Author of the Gospel, in Debate, with [absolute] *Certainty*, and seems to conclude, that their Testimony is no Proof of the Point in Hand, because it is not a *certain* Proof of it. The Second Defence. p. 15, 16, instead of supporting this first Objection, gives up the main of it, or rather contradicts it, allowing that the Titles prefixed to the Gospels import that the Evangelists therein named were the Penmen of their respective Gospels. Remarkable! that the very first Thing offered in the *Defence* of the *Dissertation* should contradict it *directly* and *in Terms*! That the first of our Authors *full Answers*, promised in the Title Page, should, instead of a *Confutation* turn out a *Concession*! The rest of the *Vindicator's* Answer is jested off thus, " The *Dissertator* and the *Defender* both admit, that the Gospel of St. Matthew had the same Title it now bears, in the Days of *Irenæus* and *Clemens Alexandrinus*, both supposing that Gospel to have been an Imposture of the second Age." The *Impertinence* of this Answer is too visible to need exposing: But the *Falshood* of Part thereof may require, as it certainly deserves, to be detected. We grant then that the *Defender* supposes our first Gospel to have been an *Imposture of the second Age*: But for the *Dissertator*, he supposes the direct contrary. In Proof of which turn to *Dissertation* p. 31. where he asserts, that the Gospel now ascribed to St. Matthew, bore many Titles and Names in the very first Age of Christianity. Could the *Dissertator* then suppose, at the same

Time,

Time, that this same Gospel was an *Imposture of the second Age*? No, most evidently. But 'tis so long since the *Defender* was the *Dissertator* that he seems to have forgot his *quondam* Principles.

Objection the Second, p. 31. of *Dissertation*,
 “ That our Gospel of St. *Matthew* bore many
 “ other different Titles and Names *in the very*
 “ *first Age of Christianity*. Of this Sort the Au-
 thor reckons up Ten. From which he concludes,
 “ that the Antients were utterly at a Loss to
 “ whom to ascribe this Gospel.” The *Vindi-*
cator in Reply to this, complains, that not a
 single Voucher had been produced for so extra-
 ordinary an Assertion: However he examines the
 Titles separately, and upon the whole proves,
 that not one of the entire Number belonged to
 St. *Matthew's* Gospel in the *very first Age* of
 Christianity. *Vind.* p. 31. &c. The *Defender*
 made sensible of his Mistake, but unwilling to
 own it, slips upon the Reader a new State of the
 Objection p. 24, 25. and instead of *the very first*
Age of Christianity, speaks only of what was done
antiently and *in the Primitive Church*. And at
 last, this *Primitive Church*, as the *Reply* com-
 plains p. 45. means nothing earlier than the lat-
 ter Part of the fourth Century, before which the
Defender produces no direct Evidence, that *Mat-*
thew's Gospel bore any different Titles. And
 then *Epiphanius* and *Jerom* say, that the Gospel
according to the Hebrews, or, as it was also called,
 that of the *Nazarenes*; of the *Ebionites*, and of
 the *twelve Apostles* was deemed by most to be the
 Gospel according to *Matthew*. After them he
 pretends

pretends to prove *Theodoret* spake of it under the Name of *Peter*. But for the five remaining Names, the *Defender's* only Authorities are *Sandius* in the last Age and Mr. *Jones* in this. And neither of these speak *assuredly* of the thing: the Former only saying, *that it is not unlikely*, the Latter *that it seems so*. From whence the *Reply* concludes, that such late Authorities (as *Jerom* and *Epiphanius*) and modern Conjectures (of *Sandius* and *Jones*) are no Balance for the Testimonies of the Fathers, who in the Second, Third, and earliest Part of the Fourth Century attribute this Gospel to St. *Matthew* only. Now let us attend to 2^d *Defence*; in which our Author, with amazing Confidence, shams once more the new State of the Objection upon us, repeats the old Ambiguity of the *Primitive Ages*, in which the Gospel according to St. *Matthew* went under Ten other different Names; bears us down “ that the *Vindicator* had nothing pertinently to alledge, being entirely ignorant of this Matter, till apprized of it by the *Defender*, and therefore was content to rest it upon this Event, that the *Disfector* had no Vouchers in support of his Objection: but that the *Defender* soon let him know that he had Vouchers, to Two only of whom the *Vindicator* made Exception, and that upon the account of their being modern.” This is the Substance of what we find in the 2^d *Defence* relating to the present Objection: which how false and fallacious it is, will appear to any one that will be at the Pains of comparing it with the preceding Account, or will look into the *Vindication* and *Reply*. Only the Reader may please

to observe; that the *first Defence* admits p. 27, that the *Dissertator* brought no Vouchers to the Matter of this Objection, and pretends that they were omitted, in *pure Tendernefs* to the Gospel in Question; the *second Defence* also, as above, allows the same; and yet in this very 2^d *Defence* p. 7, we are told the direct contrary, viz. " that the *Dissertator* as well as the *Defender* have evinced, from " the best and most unexceptionable Authorities, " that our First Gospel went under at least Ten o- " ther different Names besides that of St. *Mat- " thew*." The *Defender* may call this only a *trivial Incident*, but other People will account it a *down-right Contradiction*; unless he has the Secret of proving, that there may be *Authorities* where it is confessed there is not a single *Voucher*.

Objection the 3^d (and of those rais'd from the Internals of St. *Matthew's Gospel* the 1st) is in these Words of the *Dissertation*, p. 30, " If the " Evangelist had been the Apostle, he would " have spoke of himself with some Note of Di- " stinction and in the First Person not in the " Third. " This Objection, we see is built, not on any thing particular in St. *Matthew's Case*, but on common Practice, according to which the *Objector* thought that whenever a Writer had Occasion to mention himself, he would always do it in the *first Person*, not in the *third*. The *Vindicator* therefore had Reason to dismiss this Objection as *frivolous*, observing that it would hold equally good against *Cæsar's Commentaries* being genuine, which yet were universally allowed to be his, though he speaks of himself always in the *third Person*. But the *Defender*, 1st *Def.* p. 37,
38,

38, argues not on the Principles of the *Objector*, but on a pretended Difference between the two Cases of *Cæsar* and an *Evangelical* Historian; which he seems to have thought sufficiently answered in the *Reply*. For in the 2^d *Def.* p. 19, 20, he assigns *new* Reasons why what was proper in *Cæsar* would have been altogether improper in *St. Matthew*, without defending the *old* ones: *E. G.* “ *Cæsar*, he says, gives a modest Account of his
 “ own Actions, done upon the Stage of the World;
 “ *Matthew* on the contrary, himself an obscure
 “ Person, gives an Account of certain Actions done
 “ by another in a Corner, among an obscure Peo-
 “ ple, famous only for Lying and Imposture.” But what is all this to the Question before us? We are not now disputing whether an Evangelist, who has Occasion to mention himself, does prudently at such Times to speak in the *third* Person only: but whether the Author of our First Gospel mentioning *St. Matthew* in that Manner must needs, for that Reason, be a different Person from that Apostle, as the third Objection affirms he must. Our Author therefore, in both his *Defences*, runs off from the Question of *Right*, into that of *Expediency*, which is little or nothing to the Purpose. For notwithstanding any Difference of Case here assigned, the *Vindicator*’s Answer to the third Objection will continue firm and impregnable. If *Cæsar*, who never speaks of himself in the *first* Person, and innumerable Times in the *third*, was yet the real Author of the Commentaries ascribed to him; then *a fortiori*, *St. Matthew*, who speaks twice only of himself and both Times in the *third* Person, may also

have wrote the Gospel which goes by his Name. *Q. E. D.* Not that the Reasons above assigned, why what was proper in *Cæsar*, would have been improper in *St. Matthew*, have any real Weight in them: For how, in the Name of *common Sense*, could it be properer for an *obscure Person* writing an History in which himself bore a Part, to discover himself by some Note of Distinction, than it was for a noted Person under the same Circumstances to do so? If such Discovery be expedient to give Credit to Histories; then, as a *famed Name* would much more contribute to this End than an *obscure* one; so the concealing of that Name must be much more improper in *Cæsar*, than in *St. Matthew*. But “ *Cæsar’s* Actions (our Author tells us) were
 “ done upon the Stage of the World, *Matthew’s*
 “ in a Corner, among an obscure People famous
 “ only for Lying and Imposture.” We on the other hand deny the Truth of all these Grounds of Difference, as far as they affect the Subject of our First Gospel, affirming that they have often been questioned, and therefore ought no more to be produced in any Argument, till they have been made good. The remaining Reasons of Disparity in the two Cases, as they lye in the 2^d Defence, are to this Effect: “ *Cæsar’s* History carries its
 “ own publick Attestation along with it: not so
 “ *St. Matthew’s* Gospel, to the Heathen in any one
 “ Particular. *Cæsar’s* Account is of Facts purely
 “ natural: *Matthew’s* of supernatural. The Truth
 “ of *Cæsar’s* Relations concern us not: whereas, to
 “ disbelieve *Matthew’s* will expose us to the Anger
 “ of Heaven. *Cæsar* gave the World no new Law
 “ or Rule of Faith: *Matthew* did both. But it is
 “ essential!

“ essential to the Obligation of a Law, that the Au-
 “ thority of the Promulger be sufficiently known:
 “ which the Author of our First Gospel, by con-
 “ cealing his Name and consequently his Autho-
 “ rity, has not done. *Lastly*, that the Incarnation
 “ of the Son of God, his Life, Miracles, Death,
 “ Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, were
 “ such amazing and transcendent Events in this
 “ First Gospel, that the Author of them ought
 “ to stand by in his own Person and vouch for
 “ the Truth of them: He ought to be pointed
 “ out to us in Capitals; nor is it fitting that such a
 “ History, the first of the Kind, should be ushered
 “ into the World by an anonymous Hand.”

Answer. We agree with our Author, that the Reason of the Thing required that *Matthew's* Title to his Gospel should be better ascertained than that of *Cæsar* to his Commentaries: And if the only Way of doing this had been for the Apostle to speak in it of himself in the *first* Person, we admit what he says to be true. But the *Vindicator*, p. 71, had shown from Church History, that this was *effectually* done in *another* Way; for which he is charged with *Bigottry* and *Prejudice* p. 21 of 2^d *Defence*, but no other Remark is made upon it save this: “ This alone he thinks was
 “ giving sufficient Notice to the World in all A-
 “ ges of its *Divine Authority*.” Tho’ the *Defender* knows in his own Conscience, that no further Use was made of that Passage in *Eusebius*, than to shew that the *Genuineness* of St. *Matthew's* Gospel was better ascertained than that of *Cæsar's* Commentaries. The sufficient Promulgation of St. *Matthew's* Title to his Gospel appeared also
 from

from the Event. “ * None from the Beginning for
 “ fifteen successive Centuries is found to have dis-
 “ puted his Title, save *Manes* and his Followers;
 “ who would have done the same though the *E-*
 “ *vangelist* had spoken of himself in the *first* Per-
 “ son, as appears by his rejecting those Epistles
 “ of *St. Paul*, in which he so speaks of himself.”
 This, 2^d *Defence* calls a *most notorious Blunder*.
 For that “ beside the *Manichees*, all who appro-
 “ priated to this Gospel other Titles, than it at
 “ present bears, as also the *Cerdonians* and *Mar-*
 “ *cionites*, who rejected all the Gospels we use,
 “ except part of *Luke’s* only; not to mention the
 “ whole Body of *Jewish* Christians, who never
 “ owned our Gospel; all these must have dispu-
 “ ted *Matthew’s* Title to it.” But here, 1st the
Vindicator denies that any appropriated other Ti-
 tles to this Gospel, than it now bears; and affirms
 that *Jerom* and *Epiphanius*, who report the Go-
 spel according to the *Hebrews*, otherwise called
 the Gospel of the *Ebionites* and of the *Nazarenes*
 and of the Twelve *Apostles*, to be the *Authenticum*
Matthæi, thereby rather confirmed, than disputed
St. Matthew’s Title. 2^{dly}. He denies the *Defen-*
der’s Consequence, that all who rejected *St. Mat-*
thew’s Gospel must needs have disputed his Title
 to it; it being common with the antient Here-
 ticks to reject and to alter Writings, that bore the
 Names of the Apostles, as the *Defender* could
 not but know from *Reply*, p. 29, and again, p.
 72. It appears therefore that a Blunder was laid
 to the *Vindicator’s* Charge *without Grounds*; and

* *Reply*, p. 71.

that upon the whole, *St. Matthew's* not pointing himself out by a Note of Distinction, produced no Doubts about the Genuineness of his Gospel, and consequently that he had no more Reason to mention himself in the *first* Person, than *Cæsar* had, but was at liberty to act upon the same Principles of *Modesty* and *Decency*, which actuated other Historians to speak of themselves, when Occasion offers, in the *third* Person only.

The second Objection from the Internals of the Gospel in Debate, *Dissert.* p. 30, stands thus: " *St. Matthew* would never have appropriated to himself the reproachful Term of *Publican*, contrary to the Policy of all Authors who desire their Works should be credited. " To which the *Vindicator* made Answer, p. 39, that it had been ridiculous for *St. Matthew* to conceal his having been a *Publican*, who had related how freely our LORD himself conversed with that Sort of Men. *Reply* p. 73, further observes, that the *Defender* should first have proved that *no Jew converted or unconverted would ever give Credit to a Historian in St. Matthew's Circumstances*: And certainly it was incumbent on the *Defender* to give such a Proof, without which the Objection he had undertaken to make good, was of *no Force*. But instead of this, our Author 2^d *Def.* p. 22, calls upon the *Vindicator* for Proof, *that the converted Jews were ever reconciled to that Character through the Example of our Saviour*. " I believe not (adds he). For though we find " he once or perhaps twice conversed and eat " with Publicans, yet he always considered and " spoke of them in the general as great Offenders,

“ ders, though Objects of his Mercy.” What! of Publicans in St. *Matthew's* Circumstances, who had abandon'd the Profession? For of such only the *Vindicator* spake, and not of such as continued in that Calling. He had no Business therefore to prove that the Disciples were ever reconciled to Men in the latter Circumstances, concerning whom he had affirmed nothing; but only of such as *Matthew*, who left the *Receipt of Custom* and became our Lord's Disciple. Against this Sort we do not find the *converted Jews* had any Prejudices, or that they needed any Example to reconcile them to Men of that *Character*. It is further urged, *Reply* p. 73, as unreasonable in St. *Matthew's* Case, to suppose “ that his believing Coun-
 “ trymen, who notwithstanding his past Chara-
 “ cter had many Years revered him in Quality of
 “ an Apostle, would afterwards on that very Ac-
 “ count discredit him as an Evangelist.” Or, as it may be put yet stronger, that they who listned to and believed *Matthew* the Publican, whilst a *preaching* Evangelist, would withdraw their Assent, upon his becoming a *writing* one. Another Reason is added, *Reply* p. 75, why his former Relation to the *Custom-House* gave no Offence to the *Jews*, in that the *Ebionites*, with all their Jewish Prejudices, retained also this Circumstance in their Gospel. The 2^d *Defence* passes over all this; and the *Defender*, p. 22, is resolved still to think it more than probable that this Sort of Men carried the Scandal of their past Profession to the Grave. But from giving Proofs of this *more than probable* Notion, he wholly excuses himself.

The

The *Vindicator* (he says p. 22) will not easily prove that Matthew declined the Profession of a Publican, after his Call to the Apostolate. Nor is it the *Vindicator's* Business to prove this, but the *Defender's* to prove the contrary, who as *Opponent*, is by the known Rules of Disputation bound to make good his own Objection, by proving every Proposition denied by the *Respondent*. " We read (adds he) that some of the other Apostles followed their respective Callings, after *Jesus's* Decease, and for ought we know all their Lives." But then this happened during the Interval between *Jesus's* Resurrection and Ascension, when those Apostles had little other Employment. But it appears that afterwards, they were entirely engaged in the Duties of the *Apostolate*, which would not suffer those who had been Fishermen even occasionally to follow that Employment, much less *Matthew* to return to his *Seat of Custom*, which required a constant Attendance.

The third Objection (*Dissert.* p. 60, &c.) finds fault with our Evangelist for leaving no Testimony *who he was, when, to whom, or on what Motives or Information he wrote.* To which (*Vindic.* p. 41.) it was replied, that " *St. Matthew*, according to *Eusebius*, wrote his Gospel immediately for the Use of his believing Countrymen; that it would therefore have been ridiculous in him to have left the *Testimony called for* to Persons who already knew it in every Particular." With this, which is the Main of the *Vindicator's* Answer, and which fully enervates the third Objection, our Author in his 2^d *Defence* meddles

not. But the *Vindicator* added as follows: "Every Circumstance necessary to beget a rational Faith, in us who live at this Distance of Time, is supplied by *constant* and *uniform* Tradition. We know, on good and sufficient Grounds, who wrote the Gospel of St. *Matthew*; and that single Circumstance leaves us no Room to doubt of his being *naturally* and *supernaturally* enabled to transmit the History of our LORD to Posterity, with Accuracy sufficient to satisfy every reasonable Man." To which our Author replies (2^d Def. p. 24.) by denying, that Tradition for the Apostle *Matthew's* being Author of our First Gospel, is either *constant* or *uniform*. First, he says it is not *constant*, because great Numbers of primitive Christians never own'd *Matthew's Title to this Gospel*. But this is mere Trifling. For it is not essential to a *constant* Tradition, that it should commence with its Subject, and that the Fact should be expressly owned by every subsequent Church-Writer, whether it fell in his Way or no. Sufficient it is to denominate a Tradition *constant*, if it begins early enough to deserve Credit; and has, from such Beginning, received no long *Interruption* or *Intermission*, much less *Contradiction* from the Writers of the several Ages through which it has passed. And this is the very Case before us. Many in the Second, Third and following Centuries have asserted St. *Matthew's Title* to our First Gospel; and not one primitive Christian, orthodox or heretical, has pretended to any *contrary* Tradition. For *Manes* (who wrote *Anno 277.*) opposed the Genuineness of this and the other New Testament Books, not

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at all from historical Evidence, but chiefly on the Strength of a pretended Revelation from his Paraclet, *that they were not the Works of Apostles, but written by others in their Names* *. Secondly, Against the Uniformity of Tradition for the same Fact, the *Defender* pleads “ that Christians were “ in nothing more divided than in relation to the “ true Composer of the disputed Gospel, as is evident by the several Titles it bore in the primitive Church. ” But *first*, we say that this Gospel was never presumed to bear any other than its present Title, till the latter part of the Fourth Century: which in Points unknown to the preceding and better Ages, would be most absurdly called the *primitive Church*. Secondly, It does not appear, that the Christians of *Jerom's* and *Epiphanius's* Days, who mistook the *Nazarene* Gospel for the *Hebrew* of *St. Matthew*, did at all disagree about the true Composer of it, or believed any one to have wrote it, but the *Apostle of that Name*. Upon the whole therefore, the *Defender* has not disproved either the *Constancy* or *Uniformity* of Tradition for the Genuineness of *Matthew's* Gospel.

P. 25, He farther attempts to shew, that there can be no *constant* and *uniform* Tradition either for *Doctrines* or *inspired Scriptures*. *First*, as to *Doctrines*, he affirms “ that the Two first Ages “ were dark and had no Tradition to be depended on, except what we find from the N. Testament. ” In Proof of which he refers to *Eusebius* and *Daille*. *Eusebius* (he says) complains,

* See Richardson's *Canon of N. T. vindicated*, p. 58.

that he had no Footsteps of any History before him. What then? Are *Doctrines* contained only in *Church Histories*? And were there not innumerable Books then extant, some of the *first*, more of the *second*, and many of the *third* Century, unanimously witnessing to the *Doctrine* of the Church in their several Times, and therefore to be depended on? Again *Daille* (he says) proves “ that even in the Three first Ages we have very little extant of the antient Fathers, and that those which we have are miserably corrupted and abused.” But unless *Daille* had also affirmed, that in the *uncorrupted* Works of the few ancient Fathers was found no Tradition concerning any one Point or Fact to be depended on, his Testimony will not come up to the *Defender’s* Purpose. He proceeds however to account for the Darknes of the Two first Ages “ from the Poverty, Illiterature and gross Ignorance of all the primitive Christians; who being of the meanest of the People, deem’d all acquired Knowledge vain, superficial, and (as they were taught to believe) inconsistent with the Profession of Christianity.” But here he even contradicts the Tradition of the New Testament, which he before allowed was to be depended on. For *St. Paul* (1 Cor. i. 26.) in effect declares, that some wise, mighty and noble Men were called in his Time, and consequently all the primitive Christians were not poor and illiterate. Besides, in the 2^d Age are known to have flourished many Christian Writers of Character and Condition; such as *Quadratus* the *Athenian*, *Aristides* the Philosopher, the very learned *Agrippa Castor*, the eloquent *Melito*, *Apollinaris*,

pollinaris, *Dionysius of Corinth*, *Bardefanes the Syrian*, *Hermias* and *Pantænus*, both converted from the Schools of Philosophy, besides *Serapion* and the noble and learned *Apollonius*. The Testimonies of *Eusebius* and *Jerom* concerning these famous Persons convince us how much the *Defender* has wrong'd the Second Century, in the above Description of it. And besides these, were other Writers of the same Age, from whose extant Works it appears, that they excelled in the *Learning* and *Sciences* of their Times. Such were *Justin Martyr*, *Irenæus*, *Theophilus Antiochenus*, *Athenagoras*, *Tatian*, *Clemens Alexandrinus* and *Tertullian*. And now to all these standing Evidences for the Learning of the *primitive Christians*, the *Defender* opposes nothing but *his own Word*, of which I am sorry to say, *it has been already given for much more than it is worth*. Of this however he thinks himself secure, “ that
 “ no regular System of Doctrines could possibly,
 “ in this dark State of Things, be transmitted to
 “ Posterity: For so late as in the Second and
 “ Third Ages, there was not so much as any
 “ one regulated and established Form of Faith,
 “ which was the First Thing to be provided for.”

Answer. I entirely agree with our Author, that *established Forms of Faith or Creeds are the first Things to be provided for*. The Growth of Heresies soon made the *primitive Church* think so too: but she could not make that necessary Provision, till the higher Powers gave Leave for her Bishops to be *œcumenically* assembled at *Nice*; when, 'tis known, she lost no Time in establishing such a Form. And long before this, parti-

cular Churches had taken Care to establish Forms of *Faith*, which, though they wanted the Sanction of a general Council, were regular and in the main Articles of them *uniform* throughout the Catholick Church. * *Irenæus*, the best Witness to Facts of his own Time, has given us Two *such Forms*, in which he affirms that all the Apostolical Churches agreed, as exactly conform to Apostolical Preaching. After him *Tertullian* †, who, as well as the former, lived in the Second Century, much in the same Manner, sets down the *invariable Form of Believing*, that then every where obtained. So that the *Defender* argues against plain Fact, and denies that to be *possible* in the Second Century, which the Writers of that Age affirm was *actual*. As to Tradition for *inspired* Books, *i. e.* directly proving any Books to be inspired, our Author's Denial and Disproof of it, (*p* 26, 27.) no way affects us, and might have been quite spared. For we do not make use of Tradition directly in Proof of the *inspired*, but of the *genuine* Character of Scripture Books.

Infidels have been often told, that the Truth of the Gospel History stands on the same Bottom with that of every other antient History now extant; *i. e.* the Testimony of credible and well-informed Historians: and that therefore they are without Excuse, for not believing alike where the Motives to Belief are equal. The *Defender* (*p* 27.) tries to get over this Difficulty by several Intimations of a Disparity between the two Cases. As *first*, That the Facts and Events of the

* *Iren. l. 1. c. 2. & l. 3. c. 4.*

† *Tertull. de Virg. veland. c. 1. & Preserv. adver. Her. c. 12.*

Gospel and other antient Histories are not equally credible. I presume our Author should rather have said *equally strange*: For by a credible Fact, when we speak strictly, we mean a Fact that is possible, and such a one therefore as may be believed upon proper Evidence, in Opposition to absurd or impossible Facts, which are incredible, because incapable of Proof from any Evidences whatever. But all *possible* Facts are *equally* possible. From whence it should follow, that all *credible* Facts are *equally* credible: *i. e.* *equally* require our Assent, when proper Evidence is offered for the Truth of them. The Facts then of the Gospel, though generally more wonderful than those of other antient Histories, are, in the strict Sense of the Words, equally credible with them. And if the same Kind of Evidence is not proper and sufficient in the former Case, that is so in the latter, the Reason must be, either that the human Senses do not truly inform Men concerning strange, as they do about common Events; or else, that the Principle of Veracity does not equally incline us to speak the Truth about extraordinary Incidents and about those which happen frequently. But the contrary to both these, I think, is evidently the Truth, *viz.* that the Evidence of the Senses may as well be relied on in *strange*, as in *common Events*; and an honest Man will no more misrelate a *wonderful*, than an *ordinary* Fact. *Secondly*, the *Defender* observes, that there have been other Gospels, besides those we now have; and that we have no *Criterion* left, by which to distinguish the *true* Gospels from the *counterfeit*. But this is a Mistake. The Rules by which the early
Fathers

Fathers distinguished in this Case, were particularly set down in the *Supplement*, p. 45, 46, 47. To which, tho' the Title Page of the *second Defence* promised a *full Answer*, no Reply has been made, and yet the same rash Assertion is most confidently repeated. *Thirdly*, we are told, " the " Gospels we now use have, all of them in their " Turns, been actually rejected by primitive Christians, who substituted other Gospels in their " Room." Now, the *primitive Christians* here meant, were no other than a Set of wretched Hereticks; Men so absurd and conceited, that they pretended to be wiser and better instructed than the Apostles. Opposition therefore, from such a Quarter, is no just Objection to the Truth of the Church's Gospels. *Fourthly*, the *Defender* says, " our present Gospels are known to have suffered " in Length of Time through the Zeal and Passion of Parties, more than any one profane " History (*cæteris paribus*) we are acquainted " with." But this is false Fact: For on the other hand, 'tis known, that *Livy* and *Tacitus*, two celebrated profane Histories, have suffered incomparably more in Length of Time, than our Gospels have. *Secondly*, It does not appear nor will the *Defender* be able to prove, that the *Zeal and Passion of Parties* has at all contributed to any Alterations in our Gospels. Varieties of Reading (which I suppose is what he here means) have proceeded from the Haste or Ignorance of Transcribers, and must have appeared as numerous in profane Histories, as they do in the Gospels, had they been as oft transcribed as the other, or had we as many Manuscripts Versions and Quotations in
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Books taken from the former, as have been from the latter. In a Word, Mr. Gregory *, from whom he here imperfectly borrows, in the same Place declares of the New Testament in general, that *no substantial Part of it hath been at all scarce moved out of its Place*: which is more than can be said of many *profane* Histories. The *Defender's* last Remark is, “ that the supposed
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 “ and utterly incapable, without Miracle, to convey common History to the World.” A Charge, with respect to none of them *apparently true*, and as to Two of them, *manifestly false*. For *Matthew* had not been qualified to be a *Publican*, if unable, without a Miracle, to write down what he saw and heard. *Luke* was bred a *Physician*, and therefore his Abilities to write are above all Doubt. And as to *Marc* and *John*, we cannot conclude from their Condition in the World, that they knew not Letters; or however, that they could not, without miraculous Help, dictate ordinary History. The Sum therefore is, that the very same Reasons which prevail with Unbelievers to credit profane antient History (besides many other peculiar ones) call upon them to admit the Truth of the Gospel, and that they will never acquit themselves of Partiality, till they believe *both* or *neither*.

Objection 4th in *Dissert.* p 63, 64. “ That the
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 “ Contradictions, Dislocations, Improprieties and
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“ in their Comments on the Gospel of St. Mat-
 “ *thew.* ” The *Vindicator* (p. 43) answered to
 this Effect, “ That no sound or serious Divine
 “ ever pretended to point out real Contradictions
 “ or Disagreements in this Gospel; that Disloca-
 “ tions indeed and Improprieties are confessed;
 “ but that such Things are not charged by Com-
 “ mentators on the *H. Ghost*, who, they suppose,
 “ left Method and Diction entirely to the Pru-
 “ dence of the *sacred* Writers, only preserving
 “ them from Error; that this Conduct was justi-
 “ fied by the Event: for that these artless Wri-
 “ tings obtained Credit, in spite of all the Power
 “ and Learning of the Gentile World. ” Now,
 instead of answering these Particulars and proving
 either from the Nature of the Thing or the Pro-
 mise of the *H. Ghost*, that He was bound to pre-
 serve our Evangelist from *Dislocation* and *Impro-*
priety as well as from *Error*, *first Defence* p. 41,
 falls to asking Questions; “ Why did not the
 “ Blessed Spirit take Care to preserve the sacred
 “ Writers from all Appearances of Error, which
 “ in Effect are real Error? ” To which *Reply* (p.
 82.) answers, “ Because all such Appearances were
 “ removable by human Wit and Learning, and
 “ therefore could be attended by no ill Conse-
 “ quences. ” He asks again, “ Why the sacred
 “ Authors were not instructed as to Order of
 “ Time and Propriety of Speech, so *essential* to
 “ *good* History? ” The *Vindicator* (*Reply*, p. 82,
 83.) answers, that neither of these are *essential* to
true History, which was all the *Evangelists* aim
 at. Further, that the *Defender* was mistaken in
 affirming, that such Things were essential even to
 good

good History: For that the best Histories we have, those of *Thucydides*, *Polybius* and *Livy* are not free from such Imperfections. Here then our Author, in his second Attempt, should have shewn, that more was required from the *Evangelists*, than *true* History; and should have justified his former Assertion, that Order of Time and Propriety of Speech were essential to *good* History. But all he says is, “ that human Composures are “ never expected to be so accurate as Divine, and “ yet that not one of those Historians are so faulty “ as the Author in Debate; particularly not so “ grossly mistaken in Point of Time and conse- “ quently in Point of Truth.” But this is running off from the Question, which is not concerning what may be expected from Composures of either sort, but what is *essential* to *good* History. Again, we deny the *Evangelist* before us is ever *mistaken* in Point of Time, or that he ever fixed a *wrong* Period of Time to any Event related by him: though, as other Historians do, he sometimes chose not to observe exact Order of Time in ranging the Narratives he gives us. Upon the whole; the *Defender* has not proved, otherwise than by confident Affirmations, that there are Contradictions in St. *Matthew's* Gospel, or that the Dislocations and Improperities confessed to be therein, proceeded from the *H. Ghost*; or *lastly*, that such Things were inexcusable in Persons writing a *true* History under His Direction. Consequently, the *fourth* Objection from the Internals of that Gospel, against the inspired Character of its Author, has not been made good.

Objection the *fifth* concerns the different Genealogies of St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*. P. 66, 67, of the *Dissertation* it is affirmed, " that St. *Matthew*, by the Allowance of the Orthodox themselves, is utterly irreconcilable to other Parts of H. Writ; that therein he makes *Jesus* descend from *Joseph* the Carpenter; that his Genealogy scarce agrees with St. *Luke* or the *Old Testament* in a single Degree of Descent, except those of the *Patriarchs*, and therefore he must have written after the Destruction of the Jewish Records under *Titus*, or else he must be some ignorant Gentile Convert that wrote this Gospel, and not St. *Matthew*." The *Vindicator* (p. 46, 47, &c.) answered all these Particulars, and convicted the *Dissertator* of several Falshoods: as that the Orthodox allowed St. *Matthew's* Genealogy to be utterly irreconcilable, &c. that it makes *Jesus* to descend from *Joseph* the Carpenter; that it scarcely agrees with the O. Testament in a single Degree of Descent, except those of the Patriarchs; whereas in Truth it agrees therewith in every Step of Descent, save Two. At the same time the *Vindicator* owns there are some *seeming* Disagreements between St. *Matthew* and the O. Testament, and a vast Diversity between the Genealogies of St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*; but accounts for them so, as to cut off all Charge of Contradiction. and thereby takes out the *Sting* of the Objection. Here therefore it was *obviously* incumbent on the *Defender* to clear the *Dissertator* of the Falshoods objected to him, and to make good the Contradiction he had charged on St. *Matthew*, that so the *fifth* Objection

jection might still be *in Force*. But he does neither. The *Dissertator* is left to shift for himself, and the *conciliatory Schemes* in the *Vindication* stand untouch'd, unless his calling them *piti-ful Shifts and Evasions* has done them any hurt. All he says further is, that the *Vindicator* owns
 “ there are some Disagreements, as to the Gene-
 “ alogy, between St. *Matthew* and the Old Testa-
 “ ment; and a vast Diversity between St. *Matthew*
 “ and St. *Luke*, insomuch that they scarce agree in
 “ any Name but those of *Salathiel* and *Zorobabel*,
 “ and that this is giving up all the *Inquirer* meant
 “ by saying *Matthew's* Genealogy was irreconci-
 “ leable to other Parts of Holy Writ.” So that, according to the *Defender's* Logick, to own Differences, at the same accounting for them, and to confess seeming Disagreements, at the same time reconciling them, is to give up *both* as *irreconcilable*. In his *second Defence* indeed, he attempts to prove that the *Vindicator* has given up the Point contended for in the Objection. For says he, p. 31. “ The different and disagreeing Re-
 “ lations of *Matthew* and *Luke*, so far as the
 “ *Vindicator* admits, cannot both of them be
 “ true, and consequently the *Holy Ghost* could
 “ not be the Dictator of one of them, let our
 “ Author choose which he will.” But on the other Hand, we find the *Vindicator* admits of no *real* disagreeing Relations in the *Genealogies* of the two *Evangelists*, which therefore may both be true and so neither of them unworthy of being dictated by the Blessed Spirit. In short, till the proposed *conciliatory Schemes* be overturn'd, the *fifth* Objection has no Validity: Nor does
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the Dispute turn upon a *Quibble*, as 2^d *Def.* p. 31. would have it. We own that *Matthew* writes, *Jesus* descended from (A) and *Luke* (seemingly) on the contrary, that he descended from (B) and yet the *Dissertator* had no just Cause to say that *Luke* therein (irreconcileably) contradicts St. *Matthew*: Because there is the highest Probability that *Matthew* means one thing by the Word *descended* and *Luke* another.

Once more our Author tries to fasten a Self-contradiction upon St. *Matthew*. "He makes, says he, p. 31, "*Jesus* to be of the Line of *David*, as descended from *Joseph*, and in the very same Breath, stupidly forgetting himself, denies in Fact *Jesus* was so descended; but on the contrary says, *His Mother Mary was found with Child of Him by the Holy Ghost before ever She and Joseph came together.*" But really and truly St. *Matthew* does not make *Jesus* at all to have been descended from *Joseph*, but to prevent such a Mistake in every one, whose Ignorance and Malice are not *incurable*, he (c. i. v. 16) makes *Jesus* descend, not from *Joseph*, but from *Mary* whose Husband *Joseph* was. St. *Matthew* therefore is consistent with himself, nor is there so much as a seeming Contradiction in the Passage excepted to by the Defender.

The Sixth Objection (*Dissert.* p 67, 68, 69,) charges St. *Matthew* with grossly misapplying certain Prophecies of the Old Testament. First by erroneous Citations, as *Mat.* 2. 6. Secondly By forced Construction, warping Passages to a Sense quite foreign to the Prophets true meaning, to accommodate them to *Jesus* in
" Proof

“ Proof of his being the *Messiah*. From whence
 “ the Objector says, some conclude the Author
 “ was not a *Jew*, and that his Gospel was not
 “ designed for the use of the *Jews*, who never
 “ apply any of the Prophecies quoted in this
 “ Gospel, to their expected *Messiah*. Others,
 “ from hence, think the Evangelist too well
 “ versed and too frequent in the use of mystical
 “ Theology, to have been a poor illiterate *Jew* of
 “ the Apostolick Age, and rather to have been an
 “ Hellenistick convert *Jew* who wrote soon after
 “ the Destruction of *Jerusalem*.” In answering
 which Objection, the *Vindication* (p. 51. & seq.)
 denies all erroneous Citations, *i. e.* such as differ
 in Sense from their respective Places in the Old
 Testament. As to *Mat. 2. 6.* he denies it to be
 a proper Instance, First, because it is not *St. Mat-*
thew's Citation, but One made by the *High Priests*
 and *Scribes*. Secondly, Because the Passage may
 be reconciled to the *Hebrew* of *Micah*. Thirdly,
 Because the Letter of *Micah* is as serviceable to
 the Evangelist's Purpose as the Citation, *Mat. 2.*
6. and therefore the Difference could not be a
 designed one. As to the other Charge of misap-
 plying Scriptures, by warping them into Proofs
 of *Jesus's* Messiahship, the *Vindicator* denies that
St. Matthew ever directly applies Prophecies as
 Proofs of *Jesus's* Messiahship, and therefore is
 falsely charged in the Objection. Some Prophe-
 cies indeed of the Old Testament *Matthew* af-
 firms had been fulfill'd in *Jesus*, which he might
 do by inspir'd Direction, as he delivered other
 preternatural Truths, and not on the Principles
 of *Criticism* or *mystical Theology*. 'Till therefore

St.

St. *Matthew's* inspired Character be set aside, the Argument against him from misapplication of Prophecies is a meer *petitio principii* and can never proceed right or logically. The *Vindicator* further proves, by two plain Instances, that the *Dissertator* falsely asserted, that the *Jews* never applied the Prophecies cited by St. *Matthew* to their expected *Messiah*. From all which he concludes, "that nothing in our Gospel indicates it
 "to have been the Work of any other than him,
 "whose Name it now bears." The *Defender*, either sick of the Objection or unprepar'd to support it, at first turns us off to the Dispute between the Bishop of *Durham* and Mr. *Collins*. But in his second *Defence*, p. 32, having recover'd his Spirits and recollected his Senses, he speaks to the Subject. To the *Vindicator's* Answer, that the Citation *Mat. 2. 6.* was not the *Evangelists* own, but the Words of the *High Priests* and *Scribes*, he replies, that this Answer is very partial and insincere, for "that they,
 "the whole College of them knew their own
 "Scriptures better than the supposed *Matthew*,
 "and that they cited them truly, but that the
 "latter hath ignorantly or carelessly misreported
 "them." But this is running off from the Question, which was, whether the *Evangelist*, *Mat. 2. 6.* cited erroneously or not. Admitting therefore what the *Defender* says, that he *misrelated* there, still to *misrelate* other Mens Citations and to *misquote*, ourselves, will appear very different things. Besides, had he attended to the *Vindicator's* other Answer, viz. that *Mat. 2. 6.* is reconcilable

citable to the *Hebrew* of *Micāh**, he would have found no Room to suspect that *Matthew* had reported the Words of the High Priests either *ignorantly* or *carelessly*. Again, the *Defender* is positive, “ that the *Vindicator*, in owning “ that St. *Matthew* does not always cite literally “ from the Old Testament (for he owns no “ more) gives up the Question and allows the “ Writer not to be so clear and accurate in this “ Matter as he ought — to be guilty at least “ of some imperfect Quotations and consequent- “ ly not to have been influenced by the *Holy* “ *Ghost*.” All which the *Vindicator* will subscribe to, provided the *Defender* will prove and not still take for granted, that the Writer of St. *Matthew*’s Gospel ought to have confined himself to *literal* Citations, more than the rest of his contemporary Writers — That Quotations exact, not only as to the *Sense*, but also to the *Letter*, are of such Consequence, as that for the sake of them the *Holy Ghost* would certainly have constrained all such as wrote under his Direction to depart from the Methods of the Age they liv’d in, and have obliged them in citing, not to alter a single *Apex* or *Iota*: but till the *Defender* has *proved* all this, his barely *saying* it does not convince us.

To the *Vindicator*’s Answer concerning that Part of the *Objection* which taxes St. *Matthew*’s Gospel with *Misapplication of Prophecies*, the *De-*

* See Dr. *Pocock*’s Comment on *Mic.* 2. 5. where he proves that the *Hebrew* Word *Tfair*, in the rendring of which the Difference consists, signifies as it is represented *Mat.* 2. 6. and that a learned *Jewish* Writer thinks it should be so translated in that very Place.

fender (2^d *Def.* p. 34.) replies, 'tis all a *petitio principii*. " Our Author, adds he, first concludes " *Matthew* wrote by Inspiration, and then infers " that he was capable of putting such a Sense on " Prophecies, as none but those inspired like himself should find out." Answer. But this is a false Representation of the *Vindicator's* Reasoning, who does not conclude or take it for granted, that the Writer of St. *Matthew's* Gospel was *actually* inspir'd, but that, unless the *Objector* had first evinced the contrary, or that himself should pretend to Inspiration, he could have no *certain* Grounds for charging him with *Misapplication of Prophecies*. Because a Person writing under Inspiration or divine Direction cannot be guilty of such Misapplication. And such a one, for ought he knows or has proved, was the Author of the Gospel in Dispute. Nor can any one without Inspiration be assur'd, that a Sense put by the sacred Writers upon Prophecies of the Old Testament was not within the Intendment of the *Holy Ghost* that dictated them.

The *Defender*, out of all Patience to be thus tied down, chafes exceedingly. He asks to *what Purpose Prophecy is given if a Man must be inspired to find out its true meaning*. But does the *Vindicator* affirm any such thing of Prophecy in general, and even in Prophecies of *double Intendment* (the Case in View) are not the *primary* and *obvious* things thereby signified, *Purposes worthy of Prophecy*? Again he says, " We " are not sure tho' a Man had common Inspiration that he would be able to unfold any of " the Prophecies in the Old Testament, since " the

“ the Prophets who delivered them did not.” But we are sure nevertheless, that a Man unfolding the Prophecies of the Old Testament by infallible Direction, cannot err in what he writes concerning them. And till the *Defender* has proved the Writer of St. *Matthew's* Gospel not to have been thus directed, it is in vain to urge against him *Misapplication of Prophecies*. Further, he fallsy charges the *Vindicator* with affirming (in general) that the Prophets knew not the meaning of their own Words, nor could determine about the Events themselves predicted. For he supposes no more, nor was more necessary to his Argument, than that they did not *in some Cases* know every meaning of their own Words, and every Event themselves predicted. Lastly, our Author calls it a *singular* Hypothesis to suppose that Passages are (sometimes) applied to *Jesus* by the sacred Writers, not upon the Principles of *Criticism* or *mystical Theology*, but upon the mere Strength of their inspired Characters, “ So that, adds he, p. 35, if a Man can “ but once obtain the Character of being inspir'd, “ we must thenceforth abandon our Reason and “ yield up our Understandings to his Deliriums. ” To which we may answer, that we are not speaking here of Persons, who, right or wrong, have obtained the Character of being inspired, but of *One* who has justly acquired that Character ; and of such a one we affirm, that he will never deliver things that cannot be credited by those who keep their Reasons ; though he may require our Assent to Propositions, the Truth of

which, Reason alone could not have discovered to us.

Objection the *seventh* related to the Time of *Christ's* Nativity, " which, the *Dissertator* pretended, did not happen, as *St. Matthew* places it, in the Reign of *Herod* the Great, but many Years after his Death, when *Cyrenius*, according to *St. Luke*, being Governor of *Syria* taxed *Judea*, which 'tis certain he could not have done, had *Herod*, who was supreme Lord of that Country been alive." The *Vindicator*, p. 62. replied, that the *ἀπογραφὴ* mentioned by *St. Luke* was not a *Tax*, but a bare *Enrolment of Families*, which, at the Command of *Augustus* might be made, even in the Life-time of *Herod* the Great. To this, nothing is said in the *first Defence*. But in the *second Defence*, p. 36. we find as follows, " What could *Grotius* and *Hammond* know more than *Luke* and *Josephus* inform us? *Luke* says, that the Taxing or *Census* or Inrolment of Families was first made, when *Cyrenius* was Governor of *Syria*, and *Josephus* says that *Cyrenius* came into *Judea*, then annexed to *Syria*, both to assess their Estates and to seize *Archelaus's* Effects and Treasure." So that, according to *Josephus*, *Cyrenius* did not come into *Judea*, and consequently did not make the Inrolment or *Census* mentioned by *Luke*, as attending our Saviour's Birth, 'till after the Banishment of *Archelaus*, *Herod's* Son and Successor, who reigned Nine Years after him." Answer. *Grotius* and *Hammond* do not pretend to know more than *St. Luke* and *Josephus*, but only shew that they speak of different

rent Transactions: St. *Luke* of a *Census* or *Enrollment of Families* only, where no *Tax* was imposed: whereas *Josephus* speaks of a mere *Tax* or *Assessment*. Although therefore *Cyrenius* could not be employed in the *latter* Affair, till after the Death of *Herod* the Great, he might be in *Luke's* Enrollment, and then St. *Luke* and St. *Matthew* being reconciled, the seventh Objection is fairly got over. No, says the *Defender*, " the Governor of *Syria* could have no Authority so much " as to take a *Survey* of *Judea*, Part of *Herod's* " Dominion, while he was alive. The *Romans* " never meddled in Affairs of that tender Nature, " where Kings, *their Allies*, though under their " Appointment, had the sole Rule and Power. " But was *Herod* properly an Ally to the *Romans*? Was he not rather their Creature and their Tributary? One over whom they exercised what Authority they pleased. *Josephus* (l. iv. c. 14.) informs us, that many Years before *Herod* the Great was made King, *Jerusalem* paid Tribute to the *Romans*. And can any one in his Wits question whether they would scruple the taking a *Survey* of a tributary Country, under a King who held his Crown by their Permission and during their Pleasure only?

The *Defender* (1st Def. p. 43.) had said, *that Divines allow this Evangelist, as now read, is guilty of a notorious Anachronism*. To which the *Vindicator* (Reply, p. 90.) says, that if he means they allow St. *Matthew*, as St. *Luke* is now read in our *English Bibles*, to be guilty of a notorious Anachronism, he says indeed what is true, but nothing to the Purpose. In his 2^d Defence, our Au-
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thor triumphantly calls this a *forced Concession*: and to make it pass upon the Reader for such, he most scandalously leaves out these Words of the *Vindicator*, viz. *in our English Bibles*, and by this wicked Management indeed, makes him confess in general, that as *St. Luke* is now read, *St. Matthew* is guilty of a notorious *Anachronism*. Can that possibly be the Cause of Truth, which needs such Practices to support it? Upon the whole then, it does not appear, that *St. Luke* contradicts *St. Matthew*, as to the Time of our LORD's Nativity. And indeed had he placed this Event nine Years after the Death of *Herod*, as the *Defender* makes him to do, he had contradicted not only *St. Matthew*, but himself also. For in *St. Luke*, (c. i. v. 5.) the Time of *Zacharias's* Vision, which, by this Evangelist's own Account, (*Luke* c. i. v. 36) preceded our LORD's Conception but about Six Months, is fixed to the Days of *Herod* the King of *Judea*. This Evangelist therefore, to whom our Author himself (2^d *Def.* p. 48.) allows a good Degree of Accuracy, does not contradict, but rather confirms, *St. Matthew's* Chronology about the *Nativity of Christ*.

Part of this Objection in the *Vindicator's* Account was, that the *Inquirer* likewise excepted to the Time of our LORD's Nativity according to *St. Matthew*, as contradicting the *vulgar Æra* of that Event, which does not commence till Three Years after the Death of *Herod*. This Objection the *Vindicator* answered with the Contempt that was due to it, as founded on a mistaken and exploded Calculation. And when our Author wrote his *first Defence*, he was wholly silent upon this Head.

Head. But in his *second Defence* he makes it a distinct Objection, in Number the Eighth, and states it thus.

“ Objection the Eighth has a Relation to the
 “ Mistake with respect to the Nativity of *Jesus*,
 “ as the *Æra* of it [meaning the vulgar *Æra*] has
 “ been long settled and allowed by the Catholick
 “ Church.” Here it is a Mistake to say, that the
vulgar Æra has been settled and allowed by the
Catholick Church. For it has never been received in the *East*, and was never allowed by *publick Church Authority* in the *West*; but gradually crept into Use there. But to let that pass. The *Defender* says nothing in behalf of that exploded Calculation; but gives the Argument from it the following Turn. “ That it is a tacit Allowance
 “ of all Christians of this Author’s foul Mistake
 “ in point of Time, and consequently, that he
 “ was neither an *Apostle* nor an *inspired Writer*.” Whereas the Truth is, that neither *Dionysius* the Inventer of the *vulgar Æra*, nor any of those who approved it, ever seem to have perceived, that thereby *Christ’s* Birth was placed after the Death of *Herod*; and therefore, the *tacit Allowance* spoken of by our Author, is utterly groundless; it is nothing but a poor Artifice to cover a plain Defeat; it is a *tacit Allowance*, that he could say nothing pertinent on that Subject. In a Word, since he has not been able to prove, that the Birth of *Christ* fell out after the Death of *Herod*, his Conclusions from the *supposed Anachronism*, at the Bottom of 2^d Def. p. 37, are all false and groundless. What *St. Matthew* relates in his 2^d Chapter, touching the *Three wise Men*, the *Star* and
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the Slaughter of the Infants, are not Fictions, spun out of the *Evangelist's* own Brain. King *Herod* was then in Being, and therefore those Transactions, in which he is made a Party, might really happen.

The Ninth Objection in the *second Defence* relates to the faithful Transmission of St. *Matthew's* Gospel; and as it was urged *Dissertation* p. 48, was to the Effect following: " The Antients unanimously affirm, that *Matthew* composed his Gospel in *Hebrew*; but our present Gospel is *Greek*, and according to some learned Men, no Translation, but an *Original*: So that we have lost St. *Matthew's* Hebrew Gospel, and a *Greek* one, of whose Authority we know nothing, is transmitted to us in its stead." To this Objection the *Vindicator* spake p. 74, 75, 76, shewing, that the Fathers, in their constant and unanimous Tradition, are our Authority for the present Greek of St. *Matthew*, be it Version or be it Original; That the early Hereticks not only never denied, but *tacitly* allowed it to be genuine, by the Principles on which they defended their Tenets against that and other Scriptures: viz. That they were the *Correctors of the Apostles*; that *the Truth is not to be learned from the Scriptures*; that *they alone had found out the sincere Truth*. Whereas had the Greek Gospel of St. *Matthew*, then in the Hands of the Church, lain under any Suspicion of being either an *unfaithful Version* or a *faulty Copy* from that Evangelist's *Original*, they would certainly have objected to the Genuineness of that Gospel, and not have been reduced to the immodest Shifts above-mentioned. To the Testimony

mony of the Fathers, the *Defender* (p. 38.) opposes Calumny; saying, that *they were Strangers to Criticks, and credulous to the highest Degree of Folly and Madness.* But this he says, not only without Proof, but against evident Fact. For the Ages, to which we appeal, produced Writers of Learning and Genius, and were by no means credulous in receiving Books into their *Canon* of inspired Writings, as is well known from the History of the *doubted Epistles.* Besides which, the Christians of those Times were Men who daily exposed their Lives in Defence of Doctrines contained in our First Gospel, which it is incredible to think they would have done, without being fully satisfied *whose it was, and from whom they received it.* That Persons therefore of their Character, and who were not unanimous as to the Genuineness of some other Scriptures, should universally agree about the Author and inspired-Character of our First Gospel, could proceed from nothing but the strongest Evidence of its Authenticity. To the Silence of the early Hereticks and their not denying the Genuineness of the Church's Gospel, even when pinched by Testimonies taken thence, the *Defender* replies only by asking a Question: *If so, (says he) why were they not received by them?* Though he knows, at the same Time, that the *Vindicator* had fully answered that Question, by setting down the particular Principles, upon which the Hereticks refused to be concluded by the confessed Writings of the Apostles. He repeats again (p. 39.) " that *Mat-*
 " *thew* wrote in Hebrew; that the Gospel we
 " have is of Greek Original; therefore, if any
 G " Trust

“ Trust is due to Tradition, it cannot be the same
 “ with *Matthew's*: the Conclusion (adds he) is
 “ firm and unavoidable.” But, in my Opinion,
 this Reasoning is not firm either in *Premises* or
 Conclusion. *First*, not in the *Premises*. For
 that the Gospel we have is of Greek Original, has
 been and is yet denied by many learned Men,
 whose Names are set down, *Reply*, p. 132. *Se-*
condly, supposing our present *Greek* of St. *Mat-*
thew to be an *Original*, what should hinder it
 from having been written in that Language by
 the Apostle himself, for the Use of the Gentiles,
 among whom he went to preach, after he left
 his own Countrymen in Possession of his *Hebrew*
 Gospel, written for their immediate Use? This
 was hinted at, as a *possible*, if not a probable Case,
Reply, p. 122, and therefore should have been con-
 sidered by the *Defender*, before he pronounced his
 Conclusion *unavoidable*. Our Author still pur-
 sues the Fathers, as no competent Witnesses to
 the Tradition in Dispute, because they were *He-*
reticks and all *fierce Party-Men*, whereas the
 Point is denied by no Party among the Antients
 save the *Manichees*, who late in the Third Cen-
 tury denied the whole New Testament. He con-
 cludes this Objection with saying, (p. 40) “ I do
 “ not remember that any of the Fathers ever at-
 “ tempted to justify in any formed Discourse,
 “ supported by Evidence, their own Gospels, in
 “ Opposition to those canonized by other Chri-
 “ stians, called Hereticks.” The *Defender* may
 be much in the right to fix the Issue of the Thing
 here in Question, upon *what he remembers out of*
the Fathers, and also to intrench his Point with so
 many

many Limitations. But others can remember, that the Fathers have said a great deal on this Subject: particularly, that *Tertullian*, in his 4th Book against *Marcion*, c. 5. a Discourse formed with that Writer's usual Care and Acuteness, supports the Churches Gospels from their undeniable Antiquity and Reception in all the Apostolical Churches: whilst *Marcion's* Gospel was novel, plainly, that of *St. Luke* curtailed in some Parts, and in others altered to his own Purposes; and lastly, received no where but in the *Conventicles* of his upstart Sect. Much in the same Manner *Irenæus*, before him, asserted the canonical Gospels to have been delivered by the Apostles: whilst *Valentinus's* Gospel, called the *Gospel of Truth* was, as he affirms, *non olim conscriptum, but lately written. Iren. l. 3 c. 11.* Here was no Occasion for Evidence, because the principal Facts in the *Antiquity* of the Church's Gospels, and the *Novelty* of the *heretical* ones, were confessed on all Sides. Indeed, the great Fortrefs of the Hereticks was, not their *written Scriptures*, but a pretended *Oral Tradition* * from the Apostles, of which each of the *Heresiarchs* gave out that himself was the *Depository*. And this obliged the Fathers above mentioned to labour chiefly the Point of *Apostolical Tradition*, thereby to shew that the heretical Tenets were as opposite thereto, as they were to the *Apostolical Writings*.

The 10th Objection affirms, *first*, “ that we
“ have no Authority certain or to be depended
“ on, that the Gospel in Debate was in being, in

* This is affirmed by *Irenæus*, l. 3. *advers. Hæres. c. 2.*

“ the First Century. *Secondly*, that it ~~was~~ near
 “ the Conclusion of the Second Age, before it was
 “ cited as St. *Matthew's Gospel*. *Thirdly*, that at
 “ best it is but a *Translation*, which at no time
 “ can be a proper Foundation for our *Faith* and
 “ *Hope*, much less when the Translator is *un-*
 “ *known*, and the Translation itself never *exa-*
 “ *mined into or compared with the Original.*”

As to the first Part of the Objection, if by *Authority certain and to be depended on*, the *Defender* means express Evidence from the Writings of that Age, we confess it: nor is the Want of such Evidence to be wondered at. For, besides the New Testament, we have no Writings of that Age extant, save the Epistles of *Clemens Romanus* and *Barnabas* and the *Pastor of Hermas*, short Tracts containing few New Testament Citations, and those generally without naming either Books or Authors. But nevertheless, even from these it appears highly probable, that our *Greek of St. Matthew* existed in the First Century.

For in the Epistle of *Clemens* and *Barnabas*, are Passages or however Expressions plainly taken from St. *Matthew's Gospel*, as we now have it. The *Defender*, 1st Def. p. 64. had objected to the Epistle of *Clemens*, that it was of uncertain Date. But tho' he was set right as to that Particular, *Repl.* p. 148. and the Date of it from the Internals of the Piece itself proved to be earlier than the Destruction of *Jerusalem*; no Notice is taken of that in the *second Defence*, but the old Objection repeated. “ He now says further, it was of so little Account with the Antients that they lost it.” Whereas nothing in all
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all Antiquity is more unquestionable than the High Esteem *Christians* had for this Epistle*. They carefully preserved it and generally read it in their Religious Assemblies. We are sure it was in being so late as the middle of the Ninth Century; when *Photius* † speaks of it. How much longer it continued to be known, I am not able to say. But we see the Loss of it cannot be charged on the Antients and the little Account they made of it. Probably the Calamities that afterwards befel the *Greek Church* occasioned its Disuse, as to the same Cause we owe the Loss of many invaluable Pieces of Antiquity. Our Author adds, that *it was but imperfectly retriev'd*. Tho' I think there is but one *Hiatus* in that Epistle, which no way takes from the Credit of what is remaining. In the Bottom of p. 43. the *Defender* notes, that *Clemens's* first Epistle, according to *Le Clerc*, is great Part of it stole out of the *Stromata* of *Clemens Alex. Artis Crit. Part. 3. S. 2. c. 5.* But in the self same Place, *Le Clerc* nevertheless pronounces the Epistle *Genuine*, which is all we want to prove its being wrote in the *first Century*. The *Defender* proceeds and says, " the Epistle of *Clemens* hath but
 " one Quotation in all pretended to be taken
 " from the New Testament, which consists of
 " several Scraps of Sentences put together, ex-
 " cerped here and there (as supposed) from it,
 " but which may as well be referred to *Homer*
 " or *Virgil*." Answer. Besides express mention

* See *Cave's Hist. Literar.* p. 18.

† *Photii Biblioth. Cod.* 126.

of St. Paul's first Epistle to the *Corinthians* and of the Subject of that Epistle; besides many Allusions evidently taken from other Writings of that Apostle, particularly from *Heb. c. i.* a large Part of which *Clement* makes use of, without citing it, (c. 36.) I say besides all this, in his 13th c. Remember, says he, the Words of our Lord *Jesus*, which he spake, saying: " Be ye merciful
 " and ye shall obtain Mercy; forgive and ye shall
 " be forgiven; as ye do so shall it be done unto you;
 " as ye judge so shall ye be judged; as ye are
 " kind to others so shall God be kind to you; with
 " what Measure ye mete with the same shall it be
 " measured to you again. And c. 46. Remember
 " the Words of our Lord *Jesus*, how he said, *Wo*
 " to that Man: It were good for him, if he had
 " not been born, than that he should offend one of
 " mine Elect; it were better that a Millstone were
 " tied about him and be cast into the Sea than
 " that he should offend one of my little Ones." Every one remembers these Words, with very small Alterations, in the New Testamen. The *Defender* therefore, who affirms they may as well be referred to *Homer* or *Virgil*, must either be an absolute Stranger to those Authors or to common Modesty.

The Epistle of *Barnabas*, he tells us, p. 43. is generally agreed to be a Forgery. Which if true, would be impertinent, unless it should appear to have been forged later than the first Century, but really the thing itself is false. For our present learned *Metropolitan* strongly asserts its Genuineness, as did before him, Primate *Usher*, Bishop *Pearson* and Dr. *Cave*, three as great Antiquaries

tiquaries as any Age or Nation has produced, besides others. *Eusebius* indeed reckoned this Epistle among the τὰ νόθα, not meaning thereby, *Forgeries*, as our Author's Note asserts, but Books that were not admitted into the *Canon of Scripture*. And in no other Sense did *Jerom* pronounce it *Apocryphal*. For he own'd its Genuineness: Which evinces it to be a Writing of the first Age and consequently for our Turn. Further, the *Defender* says, Mr. *Jones* has proved the Epistle of *Barnabas* to have been written by some *Pagan*, which, if true, hurts not us, unless he had likewise proved that *Pagan* to have lived after the first Century. In a Word, these two Writers of the first Age probably cite from St. *Matthew*, and certainly from written Gospels, which to the *Defender*, at least, is an Argument that they cited from the Churches Gospels. For, according to him (1st Def. p. 63. third Note at the Bottom) *there is no certain Testimony that any one Apocryphal Gospel was extant in the first Age.*

The second Part of the tenth Objection is, that St. *Matthew's* Gospel is not cited by Name, 'till near the Conclusion of the *second* Century. This the *Defender*, p. 41, 42. says, is a "very ill Pre-
" sage, and too late in Time, one would think,
" to be of any Service to the pretended Author."
But why so? *Irenæus*, the first Writer extant, that cites this Gospel as St. *Matthew's*, flourished, according to *Cave*, *An.* 167. very little more than one Age after St. *Matthew's* Gospel was published, in which Time the Author of a Book in daily use, could not be forgotten or become uncertain. It is indeed surprizingly impudent in our
Author

Author to say it might, who himself (in this very *second Defence*, p. 56.) calls a Tradition of 300 Years, *a Tradition of so short a standing, that it was next to impossible the Nazarenes should be deceived in it, concerning their Gospel.* Besides, *Irenæus*, at the Time of his Writing, was old enough to know the Tradition of the Church in this Point, for 50 Years upwards. In Effect therefore, his is a Testimony little more than 50 Years later than the Fact under Inquiry. Further still, *Irenæus*, in his younger Days, had been instructed by *Polycarp*, a Disciple of St. *John*, from whom he must be presum'd to have received sufficient Knowledge in a Matter of so high Concern, as the Genuineness of the four Gospels. So that the Testimony of *Irenæus* resolves it self at last, into the Testimony of the *Apostolical* Age, and therefore is decisive on our Side in the Controversy before us.

The *Defender* had confidently maintained (1st *Def.* p. 15.) “ that the first Evidence we have “ for ascertaining any Author of the Books of the “ New Testament (*i. e.* the first who ascribes any “ of them to Authors by Name) is *Irenæus*. ” This the *Vindicator* (*Reply* p. 24, 25.) proves to be a grievous Falshood, appealing, among other Authors, antienter than *Irenæus*, to *Papias*, who (*Anno* 110.) mentions St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark*, as the certain Authors of their respective Gospels. Our Author, taking this Testimony apart from the Occasion of it, makes the *Vindicator* affirm from thence, that our first Gospel (*i. e.* the present *Greek* Gospel) is ascertained to be St. *Matthew*'s, and that it is urged to remove a Doubt, whether

whether it be not a different one from that Evangelists original Hebrew one. And because it is not full to a Purpose with which the *Vindicator* had no Concern, when he produced it, the *Defender* insults greatly. But after all, to abate his imaginary Victory, he may please to observe, that the Testimony of *Papias* to the Gospel of St. *Mark* indirectly proves, that the *Greek* of St. *Matthew* was in Being long before *Ann.* 110, and consequently was earlier than the Second Century, and even as old as the Apostles themselves. For *Papias* asserts, that St. *Mark* wrote his Gospel from the Preaching of St. Peter. But 'tis next to certain, that he had seen the *Greek* of St. *Matthew*, by the many similar Expressions in his Gospel. Nay, the *Defender* carries the Point farther, and thinks, that St. *Matthew's* Gospel was only a *licentious Copy or Abridgment* of St. *Matthew's Greek*. The Testimony of *Papias* therefore, in Effect proves what the *Defender* quarrels with it for not proving, *viz.* that it is as old as St. *Matthew's* Time, and consequently, that it could not differ from his *Original*. I shall only observe further, upon this Head, that our Author, who, when he had a Turn to serve, was so indulgent to Tradition, as to allow that one 300 Years old was of *short Standing and could scarce possibly deceive*, is so scandalously partial, in the Case of *Papias's* Account, which was barely 50 Years later than the Fact it mentions, as to say, that *his Testimony comes too late in Time to prove any thing certain*.

The third and last Part of the Tenth Objection is, " That the present *Greek* of St. *Matthew* is

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“ but a Translation, which at no Time can be a
 “ proper Foundation of our Faith and Hope,
 “ much less when the Translator is not known,
 “ and the Translation itself never examined into,
 “ or compared with the Original. ” To which I
 answer, first, that the Foundation of the Cavil be-
 fore us is very precarious. For the *Defender* himself
 has often told us, that many learned Men earnest-
 ly contend, that our *Greek* of St. *Matthew* is no
Translation, but an *Original* of that *Evangelist's*.
 Nor has he himself any Reason to suppose other-
 wise. Because the main Strength of the contrary
 Belief rests upon the Tradition of the Fathers,
 which our Author, on all other Occasions, rejects
 with the utmost Contempt. So that the present
 Objection affects not the Gospel of St. *Matthew*,
 but those Believers only, who cannot be persua-
 ded to give up a Tradition, which they think
 necessarily supposes our present *Greek* to be only
 a *Translation*. And yet perhaps after all, the early
 Tradition that St. *Matthew* wrote originally in
Hebrew, may be consistent with the Opinion of
 those who take his present *Greek* Gospel to be no
Translation, but to have been originally what it
 now is. For though that Tradition is as early as
 the Beginning of the *Second* Century, yet *Jerom*,
 towards the End of the *Fourth* is, I think, the
 first who, in direct Terms, speaks of our *Greek*
 Gospel as a Translation. Possibly therefore they
 did not mean to intimate that it was such, or
 however were very dubious in the Matter. If
 they had been clear as to its being a Translation,
 it is strange that we should have no earlier Con-
 jectures about the Person who translated it. For
 in

in the Case of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, the Writers of the *second* Century, who took the present *Greek* to be only a Translation, immediately ascribed the Version of it, as their Judgments led them. Whereas no one, that I can find, assigned any particular Translator of St. *Matthew's Hebrew*, 'till the Author of the *Synopsis Scripturæ*, under the Name of *Athanasius*, in the Fifth Century, named *James* the Less, as *Anastasius Sionita*, in the Age following, did St. *Luke* and St. *Paul*; and last of all *Theophylact*, five Centuries afterwards, guessed St. *John* to be the Man. Now, the different Conduct of the ancient Fathers in two Cases nearly the same, cannot, I think, so well be accounted for, as by supposing that, whereas they deemed St. *Paul* wrote to his Countrymen in *Hebrew* only, they supposed it not unlikely, that St. *Matthew* published Two Originals of his Gospel, one in *Hebrew*, for the Use of the *Jews* after his Departure from them, the other afterwards in *Greek*, for the Sake of the *Gentiles* to whom he afterwards preached. Since therefore it is at least dubious, whether our present *Greek* Gospel be a Translation or not, we might excuse ourselves from any further Reply to what the *Defender* builds on the *Affirmative* Side of that Question, 'till he has made his Foundation surer. But to let him and his Friends see, how willing we are to give all possible Satisfaction, even to their ill-grounded Scruples, I proceed

Secondly, to answer, that admitting our present *Greek* of St. *Matthew* to be a Translation, it is utterly unreasonable in him to say, that a Translation can at no time be a proper Foundation for

our *Hope* and *Faith*. For that which makes any Writings such a Foundation, is our Assurance that they contain the Will of God concerning our *Faith* and *Practice*. And till our Author shall please to assign a Reason, why a Translation can at no time convey to us the Mind of God, as well as the inspired Original itself, we have no Reason to credit his bare Affirmation, that it cannot.

Thirdly, Tho' the Translator of St. *Matthew's* Hebrew into our present *Greek* (supposing it ever to have been translated) be not known, and the Translation was never (that we certainly know of) compared with the Original, still may it be a proper Foundation of our *Faith* and *Hope*: because the Persons, whose Business it was to take Care that this Translation, if it was such, should be examined and verified by a Collation with the Original, were Men scrupulously exact about the Reception of Scripture Books (as became those who were daily in Danger of Death for their Religion) and wanted neither Learning nor Judgment for such a Work. The contrary indeed is maintained by the *Defender*, who denies the first Christians both *Literature* and *good Sense*, and is positive, that *no one Member of the Gentile Church understood the Hebrew Language*, and that *a Christian and a Liar were the same thing: they being notorious all the World over for Imposture*. But for such heavy Charges, he scarce offers a single Evidence, and we are happily able to refute them all. As to the First, we have sufficient Remains of the early Fathers, which convince us, that they had the *Literature* of those Times, and likewise Skill to use it. For the Second, it is incredible

dible that the *Gentile* Church, which in the first Times lived every where intermixed with the *Jews* of the Dispersion, should have none of St. *Matthew's* Hebrew Copies, nor any, knowing enough in that Language, to compare the *Greek* Version with it, and to ascertain its Fidelity. Lastly, that the *Christians* were notorious for lying and imposture, he concludes from the Character given of the *Jews* by their *Heathen* Enemies, taking it for granted that a *Christian* and a *Jew* were unison in the *Heathen* World. But I think we have only one Instance of the two * Names being confounded and that on a very different Occasion. Besides, to the Innocence of the first Christians, with respect to the Charge of Fraud, we have the Attestation of an Enemy, of *Pliny*, *Trajan's* Proconsul, who † writes to that Emperor, that the *Renegadoes* from Christianity, after having curs'd their *Saviour* had nothing like this to say of his Followers; but on the other Hand, declar'd it to have been customary at their Religious Assemblies to bind themselves by an Oath, against every Crime, and particularly *ne fidem fallerent*, never to deceive. From the Character therefore of the *primitive Christians*, we are morally certain, that due Care was taken, if St. *Matthew's* *Greek* was at all a Translation, that it should be a *faithful* one.

Fourthly, We would ask the *Defender*, when he tells us p. 45. how easy it was for the *Jewish Christians* to impose a false Gospel under the

* *Suetonius* in Vit. Claud. c. 25.

† *Plin.* Ep. 97.

Name of *Matthew* upon the *Gentile* Church, *cui bono*? to what Purpose should they do this? what End were they to serve by it? Does that Gospel favour the *Judaizers* more than the others Gospels, or does it patronize any Point of Doctrine or Practice, wherein the *Jewish* Converts differed from the *Gentiles*? No; nothing of all this is pretended: So that the sole Motive to Imposture, in this Case, must have been the *Pleasure of deceiving*. Nay on the contrary this Gospel appears of all others, to bear hardest against those *Christians*, who desired still to be under the Law. For in the 5th c. we meet with *authoritative* Amendments to that *Institution* and therein seems to have been the first Stroke given to its *Repeal*: To which we find nothing parallel in the other Gospels. There it is, c. 23. § 23. and there only, that the Moral Law is prefer'd to the Ceremonial, under the emphatical Name of the βαρύτερα τῶ νόμου, the weightier Matters of the Law, that Circumstance being omitted by St. Luke c. 11. § 42. To imagine therefore, was the thing ever so practicable, that the *Jewish Christians* imposed the present Gospel of St. *Matthew* on the *Gentiles*, is to suppose them *strengthening* the Side of their Adversaries, and *forging* Apostolical Authorities against themselves: than which nothing can be more absurd or irrational. And since the *Greek* Gospel of St. *Matthew* appears thus particularly adverse to the *Judaizing* Cause, we may farther assure ourselves, that as those Hereticks would not impose a false Gospel of this Sort, upon the *Gentiles*: So for the same Reason, they would prevent the like Fraud from every

every other Quarter. They understood *Hebrew* and were able to undeceive the *Gentile* Church, if a false Translation of St. *Matthew's* Gospel had been *palmed* upon them; and we find their Interest would have inclin'd them to make the Discovery. The Silence therefore and Submission of these Men to the Genuineness of that Gospel, is an Assurance to us, that no foul Play could have been practised in translating it, if the *Greek* one we have be a *Translation*.

Fifthly, if any Objection of this Kind had lain against our first Gospel, how came it to escape the Malice and Sagacity of the Emperor *Julian*. He had been a *Christian* and knew the Tradition that *Matthew's* Gospel had been originally written in *Hebrew*. If therefore he, who lived so much nearer the Times of this presumed Translation, had nothing to say against the Care employed therein, but owned this Gospel to be the Work of St. *Matthew*, as it is known he did, how vain is it in the *Defender* to start such Suspicions 1300 Years after.

Lastly, if reasonable Evidence would satisfy our Author, that good Care was taken to authenticate the *Greek* of St. *Matthew*, he has been already told, how *Eusebius* (H. E. l. 3. c. 24.) informs us, that St. *John* the Apostle saw and approved it. If therefore Ecclesiastical History is to be credited, the Genuineness of our first *Greek* Gospel is above all just Suspicion. But if, as our Adversary pretends, Tradition concerning Facts is not to be depended on, had the Verification of St. *Matthew's* Gospel, in all its Forms, been recorded in *Eusebius*, it would still have been re-

jected, on the same Grounds with the Attestation of *St. John* abovementioned. So that it is impossible for Unbelievers of *our Author's Stamp* to receive the Satisfaction they call for in this Point.

Objection the 11th (2^d *Def.* p. 46, 47.) relates to some internal Marks in this Gospel which are said to shew that the same is probably a Work of the second Age.

I pass over those pretended Marks of Spuriousness, which have been already spoken to: Such as the *Genealogy*; the Time of *Jesus's* Nativity, and the Facts related in the second Chapter of *St. Matthew*.

The first *new* Mark of this Sort is taken from *Mat. c. 23. v. 35.* *That upon you may come all the righteous Blood shed upon the Earth, from the Blood of righteous Abel unto the Blood of Zacharias, the Son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the Temple and the Altar.* “ Which *Zacharias*, adds he, “ we learn from *Josephus*, was slain in the Com-
 “ motions, immediately preceding the Siege and
 “ Destruction of *Jerusalem*, which fell out *An.*
 “ 70, some Years after this Gospel is pretended
 “ to have come to light.”

But how will he prove that the *Zacharias* of *St. Matthew* is the very Person spoken of by *Josephus* and no other. Some Appearances are against him: Particularly that *Josephus's Zacharias* is not called the Son of *Barachias*, but of *Baruchus*, which were different Names, as *Dr. Whitby*, upon the Place has observ'd and prov'd. Besides, to have made his Objection good, he should first have proved that the Evangelist's *Zacharias* could

could not be any one of that Name, in the Old Testament, and particularly, not he that is spoken of, 2. *Chron.* 24. 20. a Prophet, whom the *Jews* put to Death in the Court of the Lord's House, and who, at his Death, left this Burden upon his Murderers, *the Lord look upon it and require it.* This last Circumstance is so agreeable to the Occasion of *Mat.* 23. 35. as to make it exceeding probable that this was the *Zacharias* intended by the *Evangelist*, who consequently did not blunder, as is pretended, nor make our Lord *speak of a Fact as past in his own Life time, which did not happen till near 40 Years after his decease.* It is confessed this *Zacharias* spoken of, 2 *Chron.* 24. 20. is there called not the Son of *Barachias*, but of *Jebojada*: But still *Zacharias's* Father might have both those Names*, nothing being more frequent in Scripture, than for the same Person in different Places to be spoken of under different Names. We grant likewise, that this does not appear to have been the Case of our *Zachariah's* Father, but then we insist upon it, that till the *Defender* had made the contrary appear, he had no Reason for charging *St. Matthew* as he does.

The *Defender* farther blames the Passage we have been considering, p. 49. "as containing a
 " Condemnation and Judgment on the *Jewish*
 " Nation, which is vain, irrational, and repug-
 " nant to the Word of God and to natural Ju-
 " stice." But *Grotius*, on the Place, had anticipated this Cavil, by explaining the Words

* See Bishop *Kidder's* Demonstration of the *Messiah*, P. 2. c. 3.

thus, " That the Punishment of the *Jews* in the
 " Destruction of *Jerusalem* should be so dread-
 " ful, as that it should seem sufficient for all
 " the Murders that had ever been committed.
 " And yet, adds he, they should not equal, much
 " less exceed their Deserts. "

His last Proof of the late writing of our first Gospel from its internals, (2^d Def. p. 49.) is taken from *Mat* 27. 7, 8. *And they took Counsel and bought the Potters Field to bury Strangers in. Wherefore that Field was called the Field of Blood UNTO THIS DAY.* " Which Expression, " *unto this Day*, he says, always imports a considerable Length of Time, sometimes many Ages, but, in the Old Testament, where it frequently occurs, never less than an Age (or a Century) past. " Answer. See on the contrary *Deut.* 11. 4. where *Moses* says, *Know what God did unto the Army of Egypt, unto their Horses and their Chariots, how he made the Water of the Red Sea to overflow them, as they pursued after you, and how the Lord hath destroyed them unto this Day.* For here, *unto this Day* manifestly imports no more length of Time than 40 Years past. This Instance therefore proves nothing, but that the *Defender* can be very positive without Grounds.

Objection the 12th must first be stated as it was offered in the Beginning of this Controversy, the *Defender* having now made a very different thing of it and still representing it to be the same that was answered, *Vindication*, p. 94.

The *Dissertator* then, p. 72. had objected to the Genuineness of the first and second Chapters
 of

of *St. Matthew*, that they were not found in the Gospel of *Mark*, " which, adds he, by most Divines antient and modern is conceived to be " *but an Epitome of Matthew's.*" To this it was truly and pertinently replied, *Vindic.* p. 94. " That of the Antients, *St. Austin* is the only " one who supposes *Mark's* Gospel to be an Epitome (*i. e.* but or only or a mere Epitome such as the *Dissertator* had represented it) " of " *St. Matthew's*, and that Moderns have proved " the contrary, particularly Father *Simon* (*Crit. Hist. of N. T. P. I. c. 10.*) who well observes, " *That St. Mark cannot pass for a simple Abbr-* " *viator of St. Matthew, because he sometimes* " *delivers Matters more at large than St. Mat-* " *thew does.*" And do not the Words here cited from Father *Simon* prove what the *Vindicator* wanted from them, *viz.* that *St. Mark* does not always abbreviate *St. Matthew*, and that therefore, the first and second Chapters of *St. Matthew* are not the less Genuine, for not being found in *St. Mark's* Gospel What then does our Author mean by saying (2^d *Def.* p. 50.) *that the Vindicator durst not repeat Pere Simon's Words?* Only, that he did not repeat the preceding Words of that Critick, which are, " That *St. Mark* sometimes epitomizeth, as if he had a Design only of making an *Abstract* of the Gospel of " *St. Matthew.*" Words, that he had no Occasion to repeat: because, if true, they do not at all serve the Objection. For it is not at all surprizing, the two first Chapters of *St. Matthew* tho' extant in the Copy of *St. Mark*, should not be found in his Gospel, which according to Pere

Simon is sometimes only and not constantly an Abbreviation of St. Matthew. The Defender therefore vainly boasts, that the Vindicator is absolutely refuted by his own cited Authority.

The 12th Objection, as new vamp'd in the 2^d Defence, p. 50. stands thus. “ If *Mark's Gospel* is divine, *Matthew's* cannot be so too, since
 “ the one is apparently but a licentious Copy or
 “ Abridgment of the other, which cannot be
 “ imputed to the *Holy Ghost*, who never steals
 “ from one Mans Works to give to another, or
 “ nauseates our Minds with Tautology and Impertinence.”

To which I answer, first, that this Argument tho' numbered among the Objections to *St. Matthew's Gospel*, strikes *only* or *principally* at that of *St. Mark*. Secondly, I deny the Foundation of his Reasoning, that *St. Mark's Gospel* is apparently but a *licentious Copy* or *Abridgment* of *St. Matthew's*: I affirm that the contrary is apparent from the Gospel itself. And to let the *Defender* see the *Vindicator* is able to find more and more momentous Differences, than what are set down, *Vindic.* p. 94, 95. he may observe this abundantly made good in the * Note subjoined.

* *St. Mark* c. 1. v. 29, 30, 31. relates what *Matthew* c. 8. speaks of only in v. 14, 15. *Ibid.* v. 35, 36, 37, 38, 39. are not in *St. Matthew*. *Ibid.* The 6 last verses answer to 4 in *Matthew*.

Chap. 2. The 12 first Verses express what *Mat.* c. 9. comprises in 8 only. *Ibid.* v. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. answer to but 4 Verses in *Matthew's* 9th Chapter.

Chap. 3. v. 9, — 12. and also v. 20, 21, not found in *St. Matthew*.

Chap. 4. v. 26, — 29, not in *Matthew*. *Ibid.* *St. Mark* relates the Parable of the Mustard-Seed more largely than *St. Mat.* c. 13. and in different Expression.

Besides

Besides, though St. *Mark* sometimes uses the Expressions of St. *Matthew*, he very often is singular in this Point. His Language abounds with *Latin* Words made *Greek*, to such a Degree, as to furnish some learned Men with a Suspicion, that his Gospel was first written in *Latin*. In a Word, the Similitude in Style, between these two Gospels is so near, as to make it almost unquestionable, that St. *Mark* had seen the *Greek* Gospel of St. *Matthew*, when he wrote his own. But yet the Difference between them, in other Respects, is too great to justify the *Defender* in calling the One a *licentious Copy* or *Abridgment* of the Other: and therefore, the Objection, built upon that Notion, affects neither St. *Matthew's* Gospel nor St. *Mark's*.

Chap. 5. The *Galarene Demoniac* fills 20 Verses; and in *Mat. c. 8.* only 7 Verses. *Ibid.* The *Ruler's Daughter* and Cure of the *Issue of Blood* takes up 22 Verses; and in *Mat. c. 9.* but 16.

Chap. 6. Verses 12, 13, not in *Mat.* *Ibid.* The Imprisonment and Death of the *Baptist*, related in 13 Verses; which Events *Mat. c. 14.* speaks of in 10 Verses only. *Ibid.* The *Miracle* of the *Loaves* takes up 11 Verses, and 8 only *Mat. c. 14.* *Ibid.* Verses 53, 54, 55, 56, answer to 3 Verses, *Mat. c. 14.*

Chap. 7. The first 23 Verses are upon a Subject that fills but 20, *Mat. c. 15.* *Ibid.* The deaf and dumb *Demoniac* is treated of in 6 Verses, and by *Matthew, c. 9.* only in 3.

Chap. 8. The first 9 Verses relate the second *Miracle* of the *Loaves*, of which *Matthew* speaks only in 7 Verses. *Ibid.* Verses 22—26 are not found in St. *Matthew*.

Chap. 9. Verses 17—27, in all 11, express what *Mat. c. 17.* takes up no more than 7. *Ibid.* Verses 38, 39, are not found in *Matthew's* Gospel.

Chap. 10. St. *Mark* is more large upon *Marriage* and *Divorce* than St. *Matthew.* *Ibid.* Verses 13, 14, 15, 16, answer only to 3 Verses in St. *Matthew*.

Chap. 11. v. 16, occurs not in *Matthew*.

Chap. 12. Verses 41—44, not in *Matthew*; nor v. 12, of the 13th Chapter. Many Instances also might be given, where St. *Mark* is as large, on the Subject he speaks to, as St. *Matthew*.

The

The thirteenth and last Objection is very different from what it was in the *Dissertation* and *First Defence*. For there it proceeded on a Supposition, that the original Hebrew of St. *Matthew* had been adulterated by the *Nazarenes* and *Ebionites*; here, that it was preserved by those Sects, and declared by *Jerom* and *Epiphanius*, to be the genuine Gospel of St. *Matthew*, most entire, whilst it differed from ours in all its Parts. But as the same Arguments which disproved the former State of the Objection, equally hold against the latter, I shall first observe what the *Vindicator* replied; then how the *Defender* supported the Objection; afterwards, how he was answered in the *Reply*; and lastly consider, what more we find on the Subject, in the *second Defence*.

The *Vindicator* then, first of all, questions the Facts of the Objection, that the *Nazarenes* in St. *Jerom's* Days were sprung from the first Christian Converts, and that they were possessed of St. *Matthew's* Hebrew Original; because *Epiphanius* and *Jerom*, the pretended * Vouchers for these Facts, were late in Time, and pretend not to History or Tradition for either of them: Lastly, because the *Nazarenes* and *Ebionites* did not pretend theirs was St. *Matthew's* Gospel; nor indeed could they justly call it by any particular Apostle's Name, the Gospel itself speaking in the Name of *all the Apostles jointly*.

* Indeed *Jerom* says nothing of the Original of the *Nazarenes*; and *Epiphanius* (in *Nazar*) freely owns, that he had nothing certain to deliver concerning the Rise of that Sect, whether they were before *Cerintus*, or after him, or in part contemporary, tho' in their first Appearance, later.

The *Defender*, on the other hand, labours to prove the first of these Facts, that the *Nazarene* Sect was sprung from the first Christian Converts, both from Scripture and Antiquity: (1st *Def.* p. 51, 52, 53). For the second Fact, that the *Nazarenes* and *Ebionites*, in the Close of the *Fourth* Century, had the authentick Hebrew of St. *Matthew*, he offers little Proof, besides a presumed Concession of the *Vindicator's* and his own Avowal, that *Jerom* and *Epiphanius*, who report this Fact, were better Judges of the Matter, than the *Vindicator*.

The *Reply* largely answers all the *Defender* had offered from Scripture and Antiquity, for the *Nazarenes* of St. *Jerom's* Days, being descended from the first Christian Converts. As to the other Fact also, that they and the *Ebionites* in those Days, had the authentick Hebrew of St. *Matthew*, he proves, that *Jerom* and *Epiphanius* had no Encouragement to report it. *First*, not from the Sects themselves, who never called their Gospel St. *Matthew's*, but *the Gospel according to the Hebrews*. Nor 2^{dly}, from Tradition. The Fathers, who mention the Gospel *according to the Hebrews*, never call it St. *Matthew's*, but on the contrary, either suppose or affirm it to be *Apocryphal*. Nor 3^{dly}, from the *Internals* of the Gospel itself, which from the extant Fragments of it, the *Vindicator* proved, was generally nearest to St. *Luke's* Gospel; seldom agreeing with St. *Matthew*, and once where it does, being plainly taken from the *Greek* of that *Evangelist*.

Now let us see what 2^d *Defence* says to all this. *First* then, that the immediate Disciples of *Jesus*
assumed

assumed to themselves the Name of *Nazarenes*, after their Master, he gives Two Reasons why he will not dispute it. *First*, Because it is not very material to his present Point. *Secondly*, Because the *Defender* has already proved it from Reason, from Scripture and the Evidence of all Antiquity. Now, as to the first Reason, it is built on a most apparent Falshood. The Fact he waves disputing about, is highly material to his present Point. For, if it be not clear, that the first Converts, for whose Sake St. *Matthew* wrote his Hebrew Gospel, called themselves *Nazarenes*, what becomes of the Argument he afterwards uses (*p.* 56.) with no small Ostentation, that the Gospel of the *Nazarenes* must have been the genuine Gospel of St. *Matthew*, because it was a Book *published among themselves*, and came by *Tradition of a short Standing from their Fathers*. Nor is his second Reason satisfactory. For the *Vindicator*, (*Reply p.* 115, &c.) had offered a particular Refutation of all his Pretences from Reason, Scripture and Antiquity. If therefore he had not had a better Reason than either of these, and which the Reader will easily guess at, the *Defender* would never have left off contending for so necessary a Point, as this is. As for the other Fact, on which this 13th Objection is superstructed, *viz.* that the *Nazarenes* in *Jerom's* Days, had an authentick Copy of St. *Matthew's* Hebrew Gospel, and the *Vindicator's* Objection thereto, That they never called their Gospel so, but *the Gospel according to the Hebrews*, our Author (2^d *Def. p.* 54.) pleads, “ that the *Nazarenes* calling “ their Gospel that *according to the Hebrews*, did “ not

“ not thereby exclude *Matthew* from being the
 “ real Owner thereof.” And who says it did?
 But still it will be a good Presumption, that they
 did not believe it to be his, seeing they did not
 prefix to it so advantageous a Name. He adds,
 “ That they called it *the Hebrew Gospel*, by way
 “ of favourite Distinction and sole Appropriation
 “ to themselves” As if adding St. *Matthew*’s
 Name, would have made the Distinction *less a*
favourite one, or *less appropriate*, when all the rest
 of the World had his Gospel *only* in Greek, and
 that too a different one from theirs in *Hebrew*.
 Again, he says, (p. 58.) “ If most Christians [he
 “ should have added, of St. *Jerom*’s Days] esteemed
 “ and called this Gospel the authentick Gospel of
 “ St. *Matthew*, we can no longer doubt, but they
 “ took the Appellation from the Possessors of it,
 “ and that these, when they named the Author,
 “ called it so too. For it should seem incredi-
 “ ble, that all the World should *find out*, that
 “ this Gospel was the authentick Hebrew of *Mat-*
 “ *thew*, and that the Hebrews themselves should
 “ know nothing of it.” Very right. But we
 say, that * all the World did not *find out* any
 such thing, and that they only surmiz’d it upon
 slender Grounds; and therefore, it is not at all
incredible the Hebrews should know nothing of it
themselves. On the contrary, it is utterly incre-
 dible they should know their Gospel to be that

* *Ambrose*, who was contemporary with *Jerom* and *Epiphanius*, is
 an Exception to the Universality of this Notion in their Times. For
 in the *Praemium* to his Comment on St. *Luke*, he calls this Gospel
Evangelium quod duodecim scripsisse dicuntur. *The Gospel which the*
twelve [Apostles] *are said to have written*. He therefore did not as-
 scribe it to St. *Matthew* particularly

of *St. Matthew*, which spake not in his single Name, but in the Name of the *Twelve Apostles*. A Circumstance, which is decisive against all the *Defender's* Pretences, and yet, has never been considered by him, though mentioned and urged *Vindication*, p. 81. Indeed the Fact is *unquestionable*, and the Consequences of admitting it are *obvious*. For which Reason, it has found no Places even in this *full Answer* of our Author's.

The next Thing to be enquired into is, whether the *Defender* has found any Tradition older than *Jerom* and *Epiphanius*, for the *Nazarene Gospel's* being the authentick Copy of *St. Matthew's Hebrew* one, or has disproved the *Vindicator's* Tradition for the contrary. As to the former, he pretends, I think, to none, and charges the Want of it “ up-
“ on the deplorable Negligence and Ignorance of
“ the *Gentile Church*; upon *Origen's* having been
“ so little in *Palæstine*, and the small Knowledge
“ he had of the Jewish Affairs; and upon *Eusebi-*
“ *us's* being such a Party-Man, that if he knew any
“ Good of the *Jewish Converts*, he would not re-
“ port it.” Now, the Charge against the *Gentile Church*, of *Negligence* and *Ignorance*, has been already spoken to. As to *Origen*, he was twice in *Palæstine*, where the Hebrew Christians chiefly dwelt, and resided there (according to *Cave, Life of Origen*, § 16.) at least two Years. So that to say, he knew little of the *Jewish Affairs*, considering the Opportunities he had of getting such Knowledge, the Inquisitiveness of his Temper, and above all, his eminent Learning in their Language, is to speak against all Probability. *Eusebius* was Bishop of *Cæsarea* in *Palæstine*, and consequently, living
in

in the Midst of the *Nazarenes* and *Ebionites*, tho' ignorant in the Hebrew, could easily inform himself of their Sentiments, concerning the Title and Author of their Gospel. Nor does it appear from his Writings, that Party-Zeal for the *Gentile Church*, would, as the *Defender* suggests, keep him from reporting any Good he knew of the *Jewish Converts*; but rather the contrary: witness what he says, l. 4. c. 3. of his Ecclesiastical History, concerning the *Jewish Christians* of *Jerusalem*, and of their Descendants to the Days of *Adrian*, and of their Fifteen Bishops, successively chosen out of the *Circumcision*, that they received the Knowledge of *Christ* *γνησίως*, i. e. purely or genuinely. Our Author further insists upon it, " that *Jerom* and *Epiphanius* are of more Weight " in this Matter, than all the whole Tribe of " scribling Fathers besides." But to take off the Weight of *Epiphanius's* Judgment, hear his Character from the learned Dr. *Cave's* Life of this Father, p. 445; which is, that *of too much Credulity, and taking his Accounts of Things upon Trust*. Besides, it has been already shewn, (p. 113 of *Reply*) from *Epiphanius's* own Words, that he had little or no Knowledge of the *Nazarene Gospel*: And that *Jerom* * once reckons the *Nazarene Gospel*, tho' speaking of it under another Name †, among the *Apocryphal Gospels*, that were the *Beginnings of Heresies*, and were written by Persons, who had neither the Spirit nor the

* *Præf. in Comm. ad Matthæum.*

† *Note.* The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles, which elsewhere, in the Third Book of his Dialogues against the *Pelagians*, he says, is that which the *Nazarenes* use.

Grace of God. We may therefore be assured, that when *Jerom*, at other times, called the *Nazarene Gospel* the *Authenticum Matthæi*, he did not speak his own real Sentiments, so much as the Language of his Time. And here, is it not a Demonstration of the *Defender's* extreme Obstinacy and Partiality, to let these Allegations remain *unconfuted* and even *unconsidered*, and yet to go on *boasting* of the Testimony of *Jerom* and *Epiphanius*? If this be not *acting against Conviction*, sure it is *acting against common Sense*. But the Want of History and Tradition in the Case before us, it seems, is not to be regarded: “ For will any one believe “ (says he, *p.* 57.) so learned and orthodox a Divine as *Jerom* was, would have taken the Pains “ to translate the Gospel, which he had of the “ *Beræans*, into Two the most known Languages, in order to propagate it through all Nations, if he had not been first convinced the “ same was of *sacred* Authority, whencesoever “ that Conviction of his might arise.” Further, to magnify his favourite Gospel, our Author adds this Note upon the Word *Beræans*. “ These were the Descendants of those noble “ Christians (*Acts* xvii. 11.) who were so highly “ extolled for searching the Scriptures, and enquiring into the Truth of Things; and therefore, it is not at all probable, that those who “ had the best Means, and took the most effectual “ Care to prevent Imposture, that they themselves should be seduced by it.” Now, as to St. *Jerom's* being convinced of the *sacred Authority of the Nazarene Gospel*, the Character he gives of it, as above-related, absolutely forbids us to believe

believe one Syllable of the matter, even tho' St. *Jerom* had translated that Gospel into 200, instead of 2 Languages. But for the *Note* indeed and the Scriptural Authority for the Goodness of those *Beræans*, from whom St. *Jerom* received his *Hebrew* of St. *Matthew*, they sound high. Their Ancestors it seems, from whom those *Beræans* received the *Authenticum Matthæi* were renowned in sacred Story for Care, and Inquisitiveness and therefore would not be deceived by a supposititious Gospel under the Name of St. *Matthew*. But what Pity it is, our Author, who here builds so much on the Care and Inquisitiveness of *others*, should, on this Occasion, discover the Want of both in *himself*, by committing an egregious Blunder, against which, an ordinary Share of Attention and Knowledge would have secured him. For *Jerom*, as he himself (*Catal. sub nom. Matthæus*) assures us, received his Copy from the *Nazarenes* who lived in *Beræâ*, *urbe Syriæ*, in *Beræa*, a City of *Syria*, a Country, as every one knows, of *Asia*: Whereas the *Beræans* so highly extoll'd *Acts* 17. 11. dwelt in a City of that Name in *Macedony*, in *Europe*: And yet this very *Ignoramus* but a Page before had been taxing the entire primitive Church of the *Gentiles* with *Negligence* and *Ignorance*, and palliates all his Blasphemies against the inspired Writings, under the Pretence of *Close* and *strict* Enquiries into the Canonical Merits of the received Gospels.

In a Note at the Bottom of p. 58. we are told as follows, " That *Epiphanius* had Tradition, is
 " evident, when he tells us (*Hær.* 30.) that this
 " same

“ same *Hebrew Gospel* was before his Time found
 “ in a Cell of *Tiberias*, actually inscrib'd to St.
 “ *Matthew*. ” But *Epiphanius* really says no such
 Thing. His Words are these. “ They (the *E-*
 “ *bionites*) receive the Gospel according to St.
 “ *Matthew*. — But *they call* it the *Gospel ac-*
 “ *cording to the Hebrews*: As, to say the Truth,
 “ *Matthew* alone of all the New Testament Wri-
 “ ters, published in the *Hebrew Language* and
 “ Character. Some again have said, that *John's*
 “ Gospel, translated from *Greek* into *Hebrew*, is
 “ found in the *Jewish Archives*, I mean those at
 “ *Tiberias*, where they lye among the *Apocry-*
 “ *phal Books*. ” *Epiphanius* (*Hær.* 30.) speaks
 again to the same Effect. “ He found no Mo-
 “ ney in the Treasury, but Books more valuable
 “ than Money, reading among those, as I said
 “ before, the Gospel according to St. *John*, trans-
 “ lated from *Greek* into *Hebrew* and the *Acts of*
 “ *the Apostles*, & μὴ ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον. Ἐ-
 “ βραίων φύλον. moreover also the Gospel ac-
 “ cording to St. *Matthew*, an *Hebrew Plant*. ”
 And now I appeal to the Reader, whether either
 of these Passages will justify what our Author
 says of an *Hebrew Gospel actually inscrib'd to St.*
Matthew.

I see no more *pretended Tradition* for the Ge-
 nuineness of the *Nazarene Gospel*, but the old
 Story of the *Vindicator's Concession* from *Irenæus*
 (p. 60 of 2^d Def.) that the *Ebionites* used the
 pure Gospel of St. *Matthew*: All which had been
 fully answer'd p. 109, 110. of the *Reply*.

Now let us enquire what the *Defender* has to
 object to the Tradition against the *Nazarene* or
Ebi-

Ebionite Gospel, being the *authentick Hebrew* of St. Matthew. He says then, p. 61 of 2^d Defence, " that *Clemens* and *Eusebius* not understanding " the *Hebrew* Language; could not possibly be " correct in their Judgment concerning that Gos- " pel." But this is impertinent. For we do not appeal to those Writers, as *Criticks*, but as *Traditors* of the Churches Opinion in their respective Times, concerning the said Gospel according to the *Hebrews*. And yet after all, I see no Reason, why even their Judgment may not be allowed of about a Gospel, which tho' written in *Hebrew*, which they did not understand, was read by them in a *Greek* Translation, which they did understand. But he proceeds with a Complaint against the *Vindicator*, " for grievously imposing " upon his Reader, when he says they, *i. e. Clemens Alexandrinus* and *Eusebius* quote the Gospel according to the *Hebrews*, as Apocryphal: " For 'tis certain, adds he, neither of them mention it as such." Nor does the *Vindicator* say they do: But only that they quote it as such, *i. e.* they quote it, as they do other Books not received by the Church, or, they do not quote and mention it as they do *Canonical* Gospels. And whether in saying this, which is all he said and meant, the *Vindicator* imposed on the Reader, will appear upon a View of the Particulars. *Clemens* introduces his Citation thus, (*Strom. l. 1. p. 380.*) And as it is written in the Gospel according to the *Hebrews*. Whereas, when he cites from St. Matthew, he either cites him by Name or cites from the Gospel at large. Using therefore a different Method, when he cites from the *Hebrew*

Hebrew Gospel, from what he does, when he cites from St. *Matthew*, and plainly the same, as when he cites from another Gospel * declared by him to be *apocryphal*, viz. that *according to the Egyptians*; he plainly cites the Gospel according to the *Hebrews*, as *apocryphal*. Next for *Eusebius*, he (H. E. l. 3. c. 23.) first leaves it out of the List of *Canonical Books*: and then reckons it among the τὰ νόθα, that is plainly *apocryphal*, in our common Acceptation of that Word. The *Vindicator* therefore did not impose upon the Reader, (a Fault which from the Bottom of his Soul he abhors) when he says, that *Clemens Alexandrinus* and *Eusebius* cite from the *Hebrew Gospel*, as *apocryphal*. The *Defender* affirms likewise, “ that *Origen* mentions that Gospel but once in “ his *Greek*, in which he is far from citing it as “ *apocryphal*. But he shews his *Prudence*, if not his *Honesty*, in not producing the Introduction to this Passage, which is this, (and which with our Author’s leave occurs twice in *Origen’s Greek Works*, viz. Hom. 15. in Jerem. p. 148. & Tom. 2. Com. in Joan. p. 58.) *If any one will admit the Gospel according to the Hebrews, &c.* But does *Origen* use such a *diffident* Introduction when he cites a Book universally allowed to be *Canonical*? And is not this his constant Way of citing Books, that are confessedly *apocryphal*? The *Defender* therefore first injuriously charges his Adversary with imposing upon the Reader and then immediately commits that Fault himself.

* *Clemens Alex. Strom. l. 3. p. 339.*

Lastly, to the internal Evidence that the *E-bionite* Gospel was not the *Hebrew* of St. *Matthew*, offered in the *Vindication* and *Reply*: As that it speaks in the Name of no *single Person*, but of the *twelve Apostles* jointly; that by a monstrous Blunder, it makes *Christ* to have been baptized in the Days of *Herod*, King of *Judea*, who had then been dead six or seven and twenty Years; lastly, that, as far as the Fragments go, it is generally borrowed from St. *Luke* and once even from the *Greek* of St. *Matthew*. I say to all this we have no Answer at all. Our Author only puts us off to Pere *Simon's* Critical History, who strenuously vouches for the *Defender's* Point; which to the Shame of Freethinking and its common Pretences, is opposing Authority and mere Decision to plain and contrary Facts. For if the internal Evidence above mentioned be true, *Simon*, tho' he had been ever so great and learned, must have been in the Wrong, when he sends us to the *Nazarenes* for the Original of St. *Matthew's* Gospel.

I had like to have forgot, that our Author, to strengthen the Evidence given to his *Nazarene* Gospel by *Jerom* and *Epiphanius*, says p. 57, " that they witnessed against one of the Churches " Gospels, meaning St. *Matthew's* *Greek*, tho' " in all other Respects, they were entirely conform to the Churches Tradition and ever most " forward to declare against *apocryphal* Books; " nothing, adds he, but the Force of Truth " could have extracted this Confession." But where, after all, is any such Confession to be found? We own that *Jerom*, according to his

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known Custom of delivering current Opinions as his own, calls the *Nazarene Gospel*, the *Hebrew of St. Matthew* and *the Gospel according to Matthew* as very many think. But we know, that he commented on the *Greek of St. Matthew*, and not on the *Nazarene Gospel*, which shewed that the former only, in his Judgment, was *Canonical*. We know also, that in his *Proemium* to that Commentary, he reckons the Gospel of the 12 *Apostles* (which, by his own Confession, was but another Name for the *Nazarene Gospel*, in the same Class with that according to the *Egyptians*, those according to *Thomas*, to *Matthias*, to *Bartholomew* and that of *Basilides*, of all which, including that of the *Apostles*, he says, they were *diversarum Hæreseôn principia*, the *Beginnings of divers Heresies* and of the Authors of them all, that they were without the Spirit and Grace of God. After which, he opposes to these the Churches four Gospels. A strange Way this of witnessing against One of those Gospels! *Epiphanius*, likewise, 'tis confessed, called the *Nazarene Gospel*, *the Gospel according to St. Matthew*, written in *Hebrew* and most perfect. To which he immediately adds, *tho' I don't know whether they have not taken away the Genealogies from Abraham to Christ*. From which it appears, that the Standard of Perfection in this Case, with *Epiphanius*, was *St. Matthew's Greek*, in which these Genealogies were found and without which, he would not account the *Hebrew Gospel* perfect. In Reality therefore, *Epiphanius*, far from witnessing against the Churches Gospel of *St. Matthew*, gives the highest Testimony

mony for it. Besides, this Writer declares of the *Ebionite* Gospel, which *Jerom*, who had seen and translated it, vouches for, as the same with the *Nazarene*, that it was not the Gospel of St. *Matthew*, most perfect, but had been adulterated and mutilated. Let the *Defender* therefore, first reconcile *Jerom* and *Epiphanius* to themselves and to each other, and then he may freely make his best of them: but whilst he leaves them, as he now does, under the Charge of Self-Contradiction, they are of no Use to him; and his favourite Gospel will not have a single Evidence to speak for it, as St. *Matthew*'s.

After what has been said, 'tis needless to remark, upon the *dolorous* History of the Loss of this authentick Copy of the *Apostle*'s *Autograph* (as our Author calls it, p. 62.) in the Fifth Century, and the tragical Outcries he raises thereupon, against the Clergy of that Age. " They saw it, says he, " p. 63, rude as it came from the illiterate *Apostle*'s " Hand, and they were ashamed to own it." And well they might, considering the Account above given of it: that it never was ascribed to St. *Matthew*, 'till late in the preceding Century; that the Book it self discovered the Falseness of all such Pretensions; that it sets out with an unpardonable *Chronological* Error, and is in reality a wretched Narrative, patched up out of the Church's Gospels, with the Addition of several *Apocryphal* Tales. Surely therefore, if the Clergy of the Fifth Century had not been ashamed to own such a Piece, for St. *Matthew*'s, all succeeding Ages would have had just Reason to be ashamed of them.

And here I should have taken my Leave of the Reader, if the *Defender* had not told me, *I shall never provoke him to dispute any further with Me on this Head.* But, since we are likely to have no no more Dealings, it is necessary we should have a *Reckoning*.

Looking therefore into the Account, I find, that besides a small Bill sent in to the *Defender*, at the End of the *Reply*, consisting of Fifteen Falshoods, &c. charged on the *Inquiry*, which were neither retracted nor excused in the *First Defence*; I say, besides this, the *Vindicator* makes a further Demand: The Particulars whereof are as follows.

A second List of Falshoods and palpable Misrepresentations, objected to the Dissertator, in the Supplement to the Vindication; and to the Defender, in the Reply; and which have neither been confessed nor denied, much less disproved, in the Second Defence.

1. The *Dissertator* affirms, that innumerable forged Gospels, Epistles, &c. were published in the Names and under the Authority of *Jesus* and his Apostles, as soon as they were all dead. Disproved, *Supplement*, p. 5, &c.

2. That some of these were *as early in Time*, as any of the Writings in our *present Canon*. Shewn to be false, *Suppl.* p. 9, 10, &c.

3. That they were received *promiscuously*, and held in equal Credit and Veneration. The contrary to this proved, *Suppl.* p. 15, 16. *Item* p. 20, &c.

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4. The *Dissertator*, (*Suppl. p. 49.*) is charged with misrepresenting *Eusebius*.

5. Also, with falsely affirming, that *Eusebius* could have no Intelligence as to the Time when *St. Matthew's Gospel* was written, but from *Irenæus*. See *Suppl. p. 52.*

6. And that *Eusebius*, in his *Chronicon*, is wholly silent concerning this Matter. *Suppl. p. 53.*

7. The *Dissertator* misrepresents *Episcopi*. As is shewn, *Suppl. p. 55, 56.*

8. Falsely tells us, that *Frederick Spanheim* raised near 100 Doubts concerning the Authority of *St. Matthew's Gospel*. See *Suppl. p. 57, 58.*

9. And, that his Solution of these Doubts gave little Satisfaction either to himself or Others.

10. The *Defender*, *p. 6*, says. The *Bishop* declares in so many Words, that his Design was to defend the Canon of the New Testament against Infidels: Whereas the *Bishop* used not these Words, nor any Words like them. See *Reply, p. 3.*

11. *P. 7.* That the *Vindicator*, by his Patron's Direction, gives up, &c. *Reply, p. 5.* denies all Directions to any such Purpose.

12. The *Defender*, *p. 7*, tells us, 'tis very well known, under whose Instruction the *Vindicator* wrote. This is denied, *Reply, p. 4, 5*; and yet, without any Proof, is repeated, 2^d *Def. p. 6.*

13. *P. 9.* Many learned Moderns have thought, says the *Defender*, that *Mark* and *Luke* were not the Followers of the Apostles *Peter* and *Paul*. This is shewn to be false, *Reply, p. 7.*

14. *P. 10.* He makes an Argument for the *Bishop* and the *Vindicator*, and sets it down with the Formality of a Citation. See *Reply, p. 11.*

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15. P. 12. The *Defender* affirms there is scarce a profane History, but what has suffered by *Christian Priests*: which he is challenged to prove, *Reply*, p. 17.

16. As also what he farther says. *Ibid.* that the Scriptures themselves have not escaped *Christian Priests*.

17. P. 13. He falsely taxes the *Bishop* with having *intimated*, that the forged *Acts of Pilate*, now extant, were *authentick*. See *Reply*, p. 20.

18. P. 13. *Justin Martyr*, he says, appealed to *these Acts*, for the Truth of the Christian Religion. Disproved, *Reply*, p. 20.

19. *Ibid.* As also *Tertullian*. The contrary is shewn, *Reply*, p. 20.

20. The *Defender* asserts, that *Justin Martyr's* and *Tertullian's* Apologies were indited by Hereticks and Apostates, *Defence*, p. 13. This is disproved, *Reply*, p. 21, 22.

21. P. 15. He averrs, that our first Evidence, for ascertaining any Author of the *New Testament* Books, is *Irenæus*. The notorious Falshood whereof is shewn, *Reply*, p. 24.

22. P. 15. *Father Simon* grossly misrepresented. See *Reply*, p. 30, 31.

23. P. 19. The *Defender* says of the 2^d Epistle of *Clemens Romanus*, that it is replete with Heresy: which is utterly denied, *Reply*, p. 39.

24. P. 19. He misquotes the present *Archbishop of Canterbury*, with relation to *Victor Capuanus*. See *Reply*, p. 39.

25. P. 25, 26. Part of the *Vindicator's* Words are *fraudulently* left out: as is made appear, *Reply*, p. 47.

26. P. 26. Mr. Jones is misrepresented. *Reply*, p. 47, 48, shews how.

27. P. 36. The *Vindicator* is falsely taxed with denying *Irenæus* to have been *Papias's* Scholar. See *Reply*, p. 52.

28. P. 36. The *Defender* denies, that there is any Pretence in all Antiquity for making *Irenæus* the Scholar of *Polycarp*, and particularly in *Jerom*. *Reply*, p. 52, produces *Jerom's* express Words for that Fact.

29. P. 30. He is positive, that *Papists* regard Oral Tradition, no more than *Protestants* do. *Reply*, p. 56, 57, proves the contrary.

30. P. 38, Speaks of a Combustion among the first Christians, about the true Author of St. *Matthew's* Gospel: Utterly without Authority, *Rep.* p. 72.

31. P. 39. The *Defender* arbitrarily calls *Barnabas*, one of the *Vindicator's* sacred Writers. See *Rep.* p. 75, 76.

32. P. 40. He asserts of *Eusebius's* Relation concerning St. *Matthew's* having composed his Gospel immediately for the Use of the *Jews*, that it was founded on Oral Tradition. *Reply*, p. 78, 79, shews the contrary.

33. P. 40. He affirms, that *Eusebius* was without Learning. For which Falshood, *Reply* censures him, p. 79.

34. P. 40. He makes *Eusebius's* Tradition above-mentioned, to have been of more than 300 Years standing. Disproved herein, *Reply*, p. 80.

35. P. 43. The *Defender* says of the Citations in the *New Testament*, that they scarce ever agree with the *Old*. See *Reply*, p. 88.

36. P. 43. That all Chronological Divines allow St. *Matthew*, as now read, to be guilty of a notorious *Anachronism*: Which is utterly false. See *Reply*, p. 89, 90.

37. P. 54. He makes *Jerom* assert, what he no where asserts, that the *Nazarene* Gospel was St. *Matthew's*, *most entire*; as appears from *Reply*, p. 113.

38. And P. 52, to treat of the *Nazarenes* and *Ebionites*, as being descended from the primitive Christians of *Jerusalem*: Tho' *Reply*, p. 113, denies, that he any where treats concerning the Descent of either of those Sects.

39. P. 62. The *Defender* falsely represents Dr. *Mills's* Æra of the Gospel Canon. See this made out, *Reply*, p. 142.

40. P. 64. He stops short in representing the *Vindicator's* Words, and thence takes a Handle to misrepresent his Argument. This is shewn, *Reply*, p. 151.

41. P. 66. He tells us the *Alogi* were so called, for that they from the Beginning denied the *Platonick Logos*. This is proved to be both false and absurd, *Reply*, p. 153.

42. P. 66 *Epiphanius*, he says, all along speaks of these *Alogi*, as the antient Unitarians of the Gentiles. *Reply*, p. 154, proves this to be his own mere Invention.

43. P. 66. The *Defender* calls *Cerintbus*, a *Nazarene*. *Reply*, p. 157, evinces the contrary.

44. P. 66. He says (against St. *Jerom's* express Testimony, cited *Reply*, p. 157.) that the *Nazarenes* believed *Jesus* to be a mere Man, born of *Joseph* and *Mary*.

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45. P. 66. He makes *Cerinthus*, by *Christ*, to mean that divine Power, by which God made the World. Whereas, *Reply*, p. 157, proves that, according to *Cerinthus*, God the Father did not make the World at all, *mediately* or *immediately*.

The Sum total then of Falshoods, &c. taking those that were mentioned at the End of the *Reply*, is 60.

More perhaps of this Kind might be gleaned out of the *Dissertation* and *First Defence*; for which our Author has given no Satisfaction, either by *Confession* or *Apology*. To say nothing of the many *new* Frauds and Falshoods, that have been detected in the Piece now before us. But those already specified may serve to abate the *Defender's* Insolence, in the concluding Pages of his last Book, and to convince the World, that he has not given us his true Reason for dropping the Controversy, when he resolves *to toil no more against endless Fallacies and Evasions*. For it now appears, that after all his Gasconades, the Man shuts up through mere Insolvency. He found, that his Falshoods were *too many* to be *pardoned*, and *too evident* to be *defended*. He perceived, that he had to do with an Adversary, determin'd, on every proper Occasion, to present him and the Publick, with a *Register* of his Iniquities. He thought it therefore high Time to withdraw, after some Compliments to himself, upon the Execution he had done on our First Gospel, and likewise, on the *Plainness* and *Gravity*, wherewith he has behaved in the present Controversy. To
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which, nothing sure but his *great Modesty* hindred him from adding, *Honesty* and *Veracity*; seeing they are all *alike* conspicuous.

And now to conclude, If the *Defender* has really so much *Phlegm*, as not to be provok'd by what has been said, to dispute farther on this Head, he will however have this Apology to make for his Conduct, that next to begging his Reader's Pardon, for having in so many Instances willfully imposed on him, the best Amends will be, *to offend in that Kind no more.*

But, if he finds himself unable to hold his Resolution; if Indignation against his Adversary, or Malice to our First Gospel, shall prompt him, *two Years hence*, to practise more Frauds, and divulge more Falshoods, the *Vindicator*, if alive and in Health, will, as in Time past, still be at his Service.

A D D E N D A.

TO Page 22, Line 29. The Friends of Revelation are far from meaning, that the Gospel History has *no better* Bottom to stand upon, than other antient History. For all the Evangelists were ready to seal the Truth of their Memoirs with their Blood, and some of them gave that highest of Testimonies to their Gospels, which cannot be said of any other antient History. Besides this, the wonderful Propagation of the *Christian* Truths, contained in the Gospels, gives us an Evidence for their Truth, which cannot be brought for other antient Histories: none of which ever produced such mighty

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ty Effects and Alterations in the World. Once more, no one Profane History has been so largely quoted by Writers of every Age, since its first Publication, as the Gospels have. So that, being more secure by these means, of their faithful Transmission, than we are, with Regard to any other antient History, we have stronger Motives to believe the Gospels, than we have to believe any antient History whatever. When therefore we say, that the Truth of the Gospel History stands on the *same* Bottom with that of other antient History, we do not deny that it has a *better* Bottom: only we put the Case at the lowest.

Ibid. The *Defender* p. 27. is pleased to say, that some think, whatever has any Relation to Religion is more particularly liable to suspicion: and in a Note gives us Lord Bacon's Words (*Nov. Org. l. 2. Aph. 29.*) to the same Effect, *viz. Maximè habenda sunt pro suspectis, quæ quomodocunque dependent à Religione.*—Doubtless our Author intended we should take this Maxim of Lord Bacon, as a Rule laid down by him for judging of historical Facts *in general*. Indeed, if the Words are otherwise taken, they are foreign to the Point under Consideration. But really in the Passage it self they relate and are confined solely to a particular Case, a Natural History of *monstrous* Births. In compiling of which, out of antient Histories, that Author recommends great Caution, saying, *Maximè autem habenda sunt pro suspectis quæ pendent quomodocunque à religione; ut prodigia Livii.* But those Relations (*i. e.* of monstrous Births) are chiefly to be suspected, which any way depend upon Religion: For Instance, the *Prodigies* of Livy. This learned therefore and noble Writer's Words, used on a particular Occasion, and that quite remote from the Facts of the Gospel, are most shamefully misapplied thereto by the *Defender*. The Lord Bacon was religious as well as learned, and never speaks of the New Testament Miracles,

Miracles, but with Belief and Reverence. See particularly *Vol. I. p. 121.* and *Vol. II. p. 396, 397.*

Page 23, Line 13, When I say that all credible Facts are *equally* credible, I would be understood of Facts considered in themselves only and apart from all external Evidence And in this Sense, I see no Room for Degrees of Credibility or Incredibility, any more than for Degrees of Absurdity, Contradiction or Impossibility. In common Language indeed we are apt to call things more or less absurd, &c. but I presume, at such Times, no more is meant, than that the Absurdity or Contradiction is more or less apparent.

Page 51, Line 22. I just now find that Dr. *Whitby*, in the End of his Prefatory Discourse to the Four Gospels, concurs with the *Vindicator* in thinking it very reasonable to conceive, that St. *Matthew* left the Gospel written in *Greek* among the *Gentiles*, as he had before left one in *Hebrew* among the *Jews*.

The *Defender*, p. 55, wishes the *Vindicator* had given the Names of those learned Men, who, besides Dr. *Mangey*, question what our Author calls a *Scriptural* Truth, on the Strength of *Acts* 24. 5. and 14. viz. that the first *Jewish* Converts assumed to themselves the Name of *Nazarenes*. But he may please to know, that the *Vindicator* named two such, i. e. *Grotius* and *Hammond*, *Rep. p. 115*, where he shews their joint Opinion to have been, that by *Nazarenes*, *Acts* 24. 5. *Tertullus* meant *Christians* at large and not *Jewish* Believers especially: which Interpretation of theirs, renders, what our Author calls a *Scripture* Truth, more than questionable, even *plainly false*.

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